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Vol. CLXVII
No. 2180

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Volume CLXVII No. 2180

The SPHERE, London, November 1, 1941

THE SPHERE

With which is incorporated "THE GRAPHIC"

The Empire's Illustrated Weekly

London, November 1, 1941

PRISONERS ABOARD A BRITISH BATTLESHIP: GERMANS AND ITALIANS, FORMER SUBMARINE AND MERCHANT CREWS, BEING PUT TO WORK ON THE UPPER DECK DURING THEIR PASSAGE TO AN INTERNMENT CAMP AFTER CAPTURE AT SEA

This is one of a series of pictures (others appear on page 135 of this issue) taken on a British warship recently. In this series are seen a number of German and Italian prisoners of war, formerly the crews of enemy submarines and merchant vessels captured by the Royal Navy, being transported to internment camps. All prisoners, officers and ratings alike, were given the same food and sleeping quarters as the ship's company : although closely guarded during the voyage, they were, nevertheless, allowed plenty of exercise in the fresh air. Contrast this treatment with that meted out to our own men in such German hell-ships as the *Altmark*. The capture of enemy seamen goes on without ceasing in all the theatres of naval warfare, and numbers of them are now in our hands : from captured supply ships, from doomed submarines and other naval craft, they come for internment for the remainder of the war

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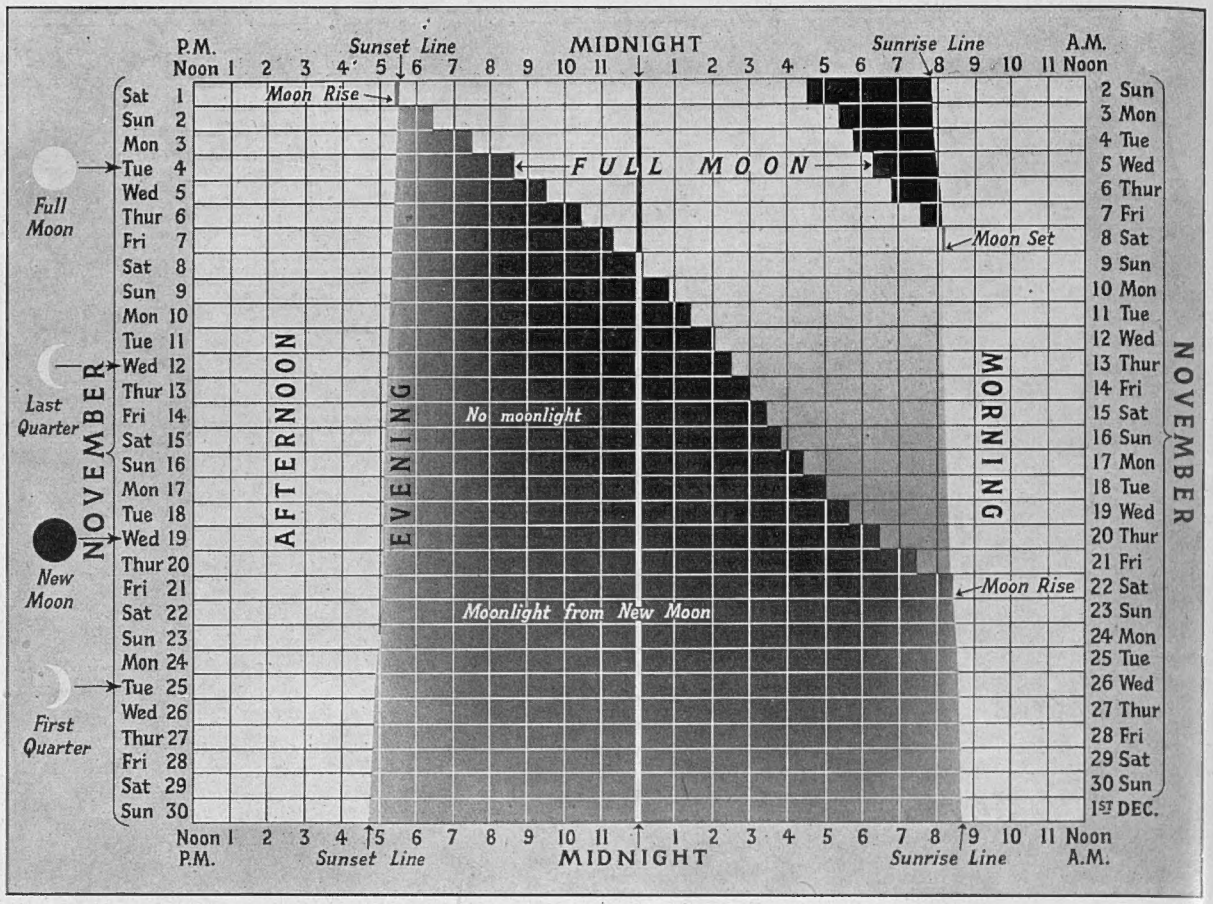
A WAR NEWSLETTER —No. 113

1, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.1.

Invasion!—Policy or Indecision?—I confess that (as a journalist) I find embarrassing, and (as a citizen) view with disquiet the quite patent touchiness of our Army at home under irresponsible criticism, and the curiously muddled state of mind of all concerned on the question of the probability of the early invasion of Britain. It is natural (and obvious) that our trained, and overtrained, Regular Army units at home are spoiling for a "show" and resent the innuendoes of foolish critics and other malicious pinpricks. It is equally clear that the Government appreciates this healthy impatience for action and the danger of the risks of staleness and boredom and indiscipline creeping in, and, rightly or wrongly, believes that the best stimulus and corrective are continually to impress on the Army and the nation the graveness of the risk of early invasion. But the very limited information available to junior Ministers can hardly justify them in the very strong line they sometimes take in public warnings. I take as an example the trouncing of General Freyberg for expressing his considered opinion that Nazi generals and troops would "think twice" before launching an air-borne attack on an island which enjoyed superiority or parity in air attack and defence. Now, if there is one man alive to-day whose opinions on the subject of air-borne invasion of an island should be listened to and studied with deep respect, that man is General Freyberg. That at such a juncture as this, such a man should be snubbed and ticked off by a junior politician of no importance should be resented by the whole nation and with a loud, unanimous voice.

What the Nation Ought to Know.—There are other channels for the pent or flowing energies of the Services and the nation besides preparation to withstand invasion. In war there are always risks which must be taken (Hitler has successfully taken a dozen such major risks and has adopted the policy of "first things first" and "one thing at a time"). It is vitally relevant to the whole nation that it should hear and weigh carefully General Freyberg's opinions, drawn from his experiences in Crete, unless the nation is given something more than an oblique hint that those opinions—though honest and soundly based—are at this juncture, in the Government's view, dangerous fare for public consumption. There are still in existence methods whereby the nation can be confided in, without the information being broadcast to the enemy, and it is high time that such methods should be employed on this particular question. For at the moment there is muddle and diversity in the expressed opinions of Government spokesmen and muddle in the public mind, and the result is that the best modern text-books on a vital subject of warfare are not authorised for study by millions who should know everything there is to know about it. I look at it this way. There are a thousand domestic chores of great urgency to be done in the lonely loghouse. But if you cry "Wolf!" all day long and keep the family peering out of the windows with rifles cocked, no wood will be cut and no dinners cooked. The public should know clearly, in the throes of existence amid a hundred risks, which risk looms nearest and largest, *and why*.



NOVEMBER—A MONTH OF MANY MOONLESS NIGHTS

The full moon occurs very early in the month, on the night of the 4th, and is visible in the sky for only ten hours, setting an hour and three-quarters before sunrise; thus on no night during the month is there a period without total darkness, as was the case in the preceding months during the summer. The last quarter is seen in the early morning of Thursday, the 13th, rising at 2.30 a.m., after which the periods of darkness become longer, the waning moon barely illuminating the early-morning sky before sunrise. The new moon occurs on the 19th, after which the faint rays of the first quarter will be seen on the 25th. It will be noted that at the end of the month the nights are becoming very long, and the sun does not rise till 8.45 a.m.

A limited number of these charts will be supplied free of charge on application to the Publisher, "The Sphere," Commonwealth House, 1, New Oxford Street, W.C.1, but 2½d. in stamps must be enclosed with the application

Strength and Joy—a Nazi's Reflections.—Lying under a tank in frozen mud, conscious of frostbite and very tired and hungry, Johann Schmidt, formerly of Bremen and now a sergeant in a Panzer Division, went back in memory over the last four years of his young life. He came of a large family. His father was a skilled hand in a shipbuilding yard and had earned good pay. His mother was an efficient housewife and a wise mother. He had many brothers and sisters, some older, some younger, than he. Of them all, he embraced the Nazi doctrines most enthusiastically and most completely. He was the family tyrant, the pivot of a Nazi household. His god was the Führer, his creed the Nazi creed in its most stark and advanced form. From the age of fourteen he had drunk in the strong, raw spirit; pride of race, rule of force, sacrifice of self to the State, the master destiny of the pure German stock, the wrongs done to Germany in the past, the treachery from within that once only brought an unconquerable people to accept a temporary defeat, the theories of encirclement and living room, the dream of world conquest and the final wiping-out of past humiliation. He had drunk and absorbed it into his system, and exhaled in every word he spoke and action he performed the full, pure spirit of the Nazi creed. He recalled what his "religion" had cost him. He had betrayed an elder brother to the Gestapo—it was his duty. He had brutally cast off a once favourite sister because of her devotion to a man suspected of Hebrew origin. But he had won a position of trust in his youth organisation unit, and he had done well and gone ahead in the Army. He had seen the retribution taken in Rotterdam; he had helped to drive the beastly Englishmen into the sea at Dunkirk; he had done his turn in liquidating the Polish barbarians and had killed more men in cold blood than in the heat of battle. Blood-lust was as fierce a passion as love of women, if it left sometimes a nasty taste in the mouth. It was in Poland with the army of occupation that he fell ill. It was there that he had news that the murderers from England, in their filthy campaign of bombing innocent civilians, had destroyed his home and killed his father and three of his sisters; and he could get no news of his mother. Afterwards they sent him to France. He served in Paris. Always he had dreamed of the glory of strutting, a conqueror, in the Place Vendome. But it didn't work out that way. He remembered the look in the eyes of the Frenchwoman in whose house he lived; it was not the look which a conqueror expects, for it seemed to strip him naked; hatred and, worse, contempt were in that cool, polite, contemplative glance. It bore further still into his very soul and laid it bare, not a shrine of heroic traditions but a dustbin. He was humiliated in Paris. A conquered woman of a rotten race had made *him*, a Nazi, feel like a worm.

Dead Sea Fruit.—From Paris he had gone to the Eastern Front, one more swift triumph for his famous Division. He had travelled—a fit man again—across a broad track of Europe blasted by Nazi arms. Desolation and death, charred forests, trampled corn, rotting bodies, broken transport, the rubble and ruins of great cities, wild-eyed, starving women, white and scared children, disease, hunger, despair, desolation, written large on every ruin, in every face. But above all, in every face, on every wall, as though written in letters of fire, hate of the Nazis, and, worse still, contempt, utter and inexpressible, such as in old days civilised men felt for the basest animal, the outrager of a child; the contempt and loathing which sane men feel for criminal lunatics. It was the very reversal of all his dreams, of all his creed. Why must Europe still refuse to acknowledge the race of gods? He heard now, from time to time, from his mother. She was living in want and misery among strangers. Always *she* had been the one of his family who had most obstinately, if gently, questioned the exuberance of his youthful enthusiasms. She had clung in some sort to her religion, and the old outworn traditions, and the last words of her last letter echoed in his heart as he lay in the frozen mud in front of Moscow. "'Strength through joy,' little Hans? We had the 'joy' and we gained the strength, and you were right, therefore. Joy through strength, my son? We do not see that here yet. Can you send me news of it? You have won all Europe. *What have you won?* Tell your mother before she, too, dies." What had they won? Where was the end? They had gone forth to destroy the pariahs of Europe and culture: and it was they, the victorious Nazis, who were made to feel like pariahs all over Europe. Could it be that force alone was incapable of opening the gates to a new order? Could it be that strength without justice and without mercy bred strength in the conquered, and not fear? Could it be that his Führer and his creed alike were open to question? Could strength ever bring joy or the sword peace?

Vichy Dilemma.—If it were possible to feel sympathy with men of a proud race who have accepted defeat before it came, who have sacrificed courage and hope to flabby compromise, or country to self-interest, I should feel sympathy to-day with shaky old Pétain and the unspeakable Darlan and even the unmentionable Laval. These men held the highest posts in the Army, Navy and Government of one of the proudest nations on earth, and to-day they are one and indivisible with alien murderers of their innocent countrymen. They are caught red-handed, condoning mass murder without trial, approving the policy which banks everything on breaking the spirit of France by fear of death, a policy which has always failed, even with savages. These pale traitors have been caught in a net invisible to them in 1940, and find themselves to-day sharing on equal terms with the Nazis the guilt, the shame, the hate and the contempt of the French nation. While Pétain and Darlan remain at their "posts," every French hostage shot by the Nazis is the deliberately selected victim of a French Marshal and a French Admiral who have chosen and who practise Nazi justice and Nazi discipline on their own countrymen. What a fearful fate, what a frightful retribution for a sudden single impulse bred of panic! Have these two men the courage even now to protest, to draw back, to resign rather than be a party to mass murder of their own countrymen in the name of . . . of what?—compromise, peace at any price, humiliation, degradation, as the price of immunity from war? Who so trades with the Nazis touches pitch. The blackest character emerges the blacker from such traffic. For thirty pieces Pilate sold himself, not Christ. These wretched men learned that truth before the ink was dry on their compact with Satan.

THE OLD STAGER

THE PARACHUTISTS ON PARADE—HUNDREDS AND HUNDREDS OF THEM : It will be observed that the men are armed with the latest types of automatic guns, and that their equipment is somewhat different from that with which they were first issued. The special high boots, for instance, have been abandoned in favour of infantry anklets ; and the type of rubber helmet is different from that previously worn

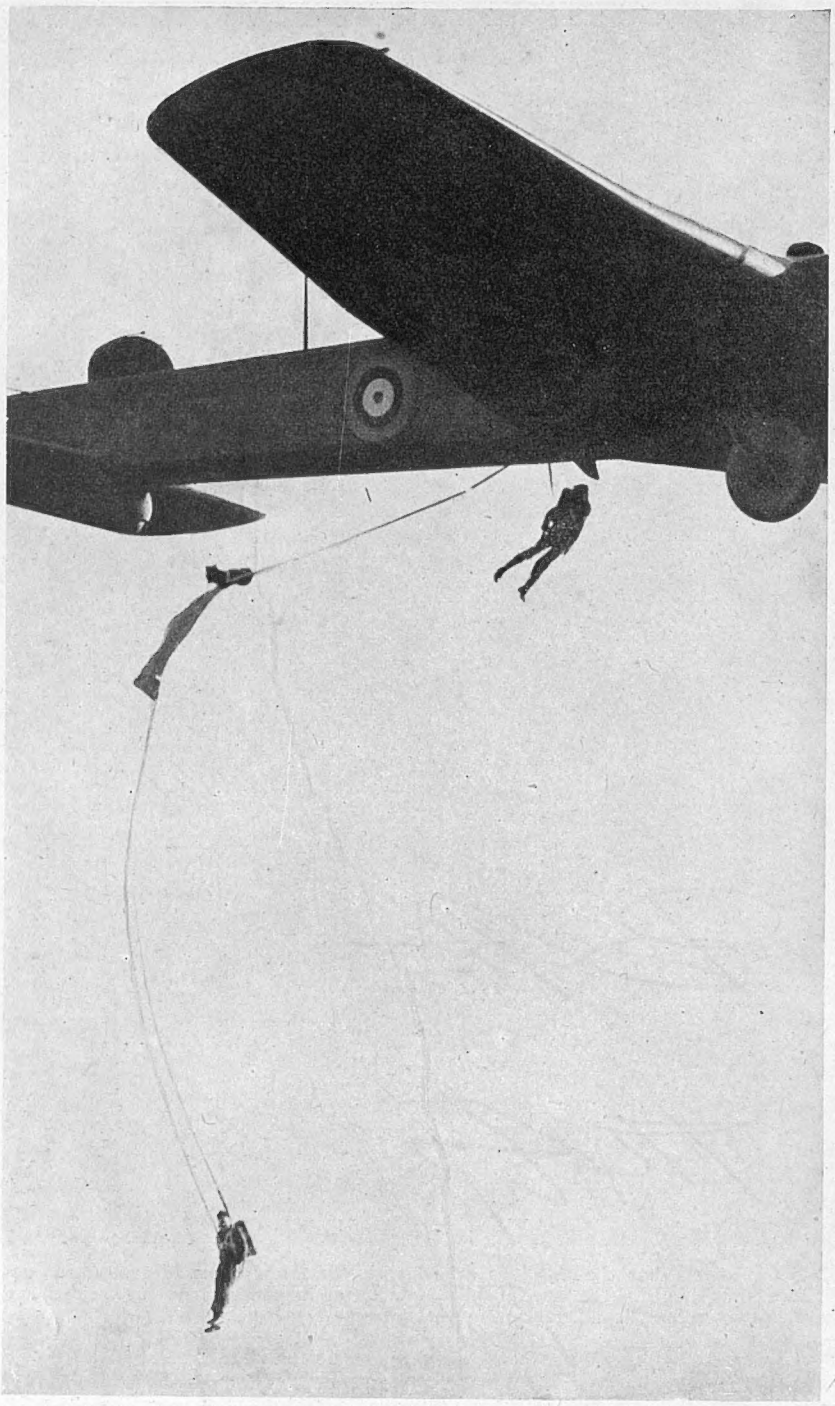
MARCHING TO THE AIRCRAFT TO TAKE PART IN A MOCK ATTACK : The troops are usually carried to the scene of action in the big Whitley bombers which can carry a great number of men and their equipment on each journey

BRITISH PARACHUTE TROOPS IN TRAINING

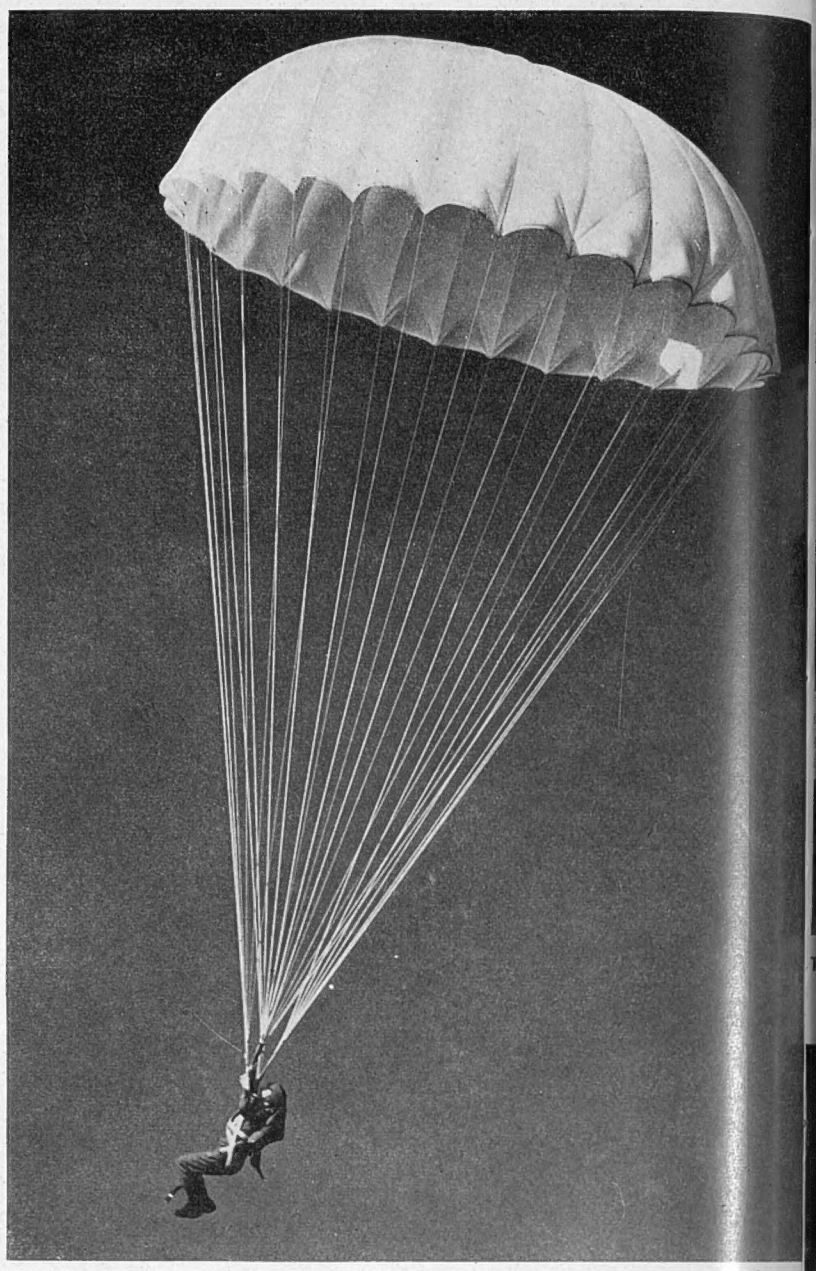
A Special New Series Taken During the Past Few Days at an English Training Centre

A visit a few days ago to a Parachute Troop Training Centre has produced the fine set of pictures presented to our readers on this and the following pages. The men are prepared for their skilled and daring work by instructors of both the Army and the Royal Air Force, and their specialised training begins at an R.A.F. station. It is the R.A.F. which provides the special parachute equipment and the aircraft to carry the troops ; and it is the R.A.F. which trains the pilot in the technique of troop-dropping, in place of bomb-dropping. It is the Army's duty to select the parachute troops from the continual flow of volunteers (who come from every branch of the Forces) and to supply them with weapons. The men selected must be possessed of good physique, of sturdy build, with strong ankles and wrists : the natural qualities of a fine soldier—such as courage, determination, high morale, tenacity, fighting ability—are essential. The team spirit is fostered throughout the period of training, but the men are also expected to act on their own initiative as well as in combined action. Since their work is so highly dangerous, all the volunteer parachutists receive extra pay. It will be observed from the pictures reproduced on this and the following pages that there have been recent modifications in the equipment now worn : the helmet, for instance, is somewhat different from that shown in previous pictures, and it would appear that anklets are now generally worn by all in place of the special boots which were at first issued

BRITISH PARACHUTE TROOPS in TRAINING



A WONDERFUL PICTURE SHOWING TWO MEN ACTUALLY IN MID-AIR : The parachutes are attached by a cord which quickly pulls them open, so that jumps can be made from a low altitude

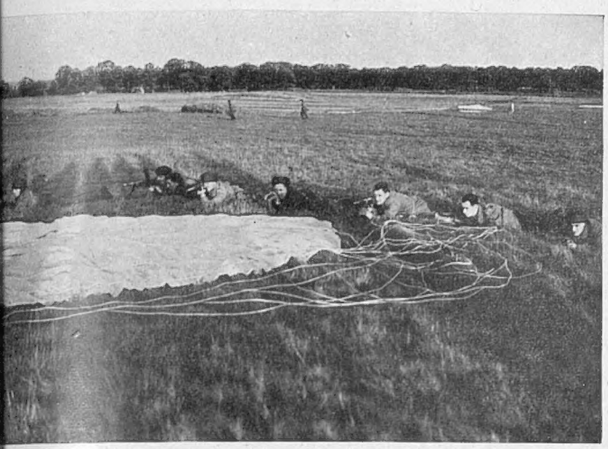


HOW THE DESCENT SHOULD BE MADE : The parachute has opened to its full exten and the soldier has assumed the proper attitude for landing in the easie manner—knees bent to take the shock, and hands holding on to the shrou

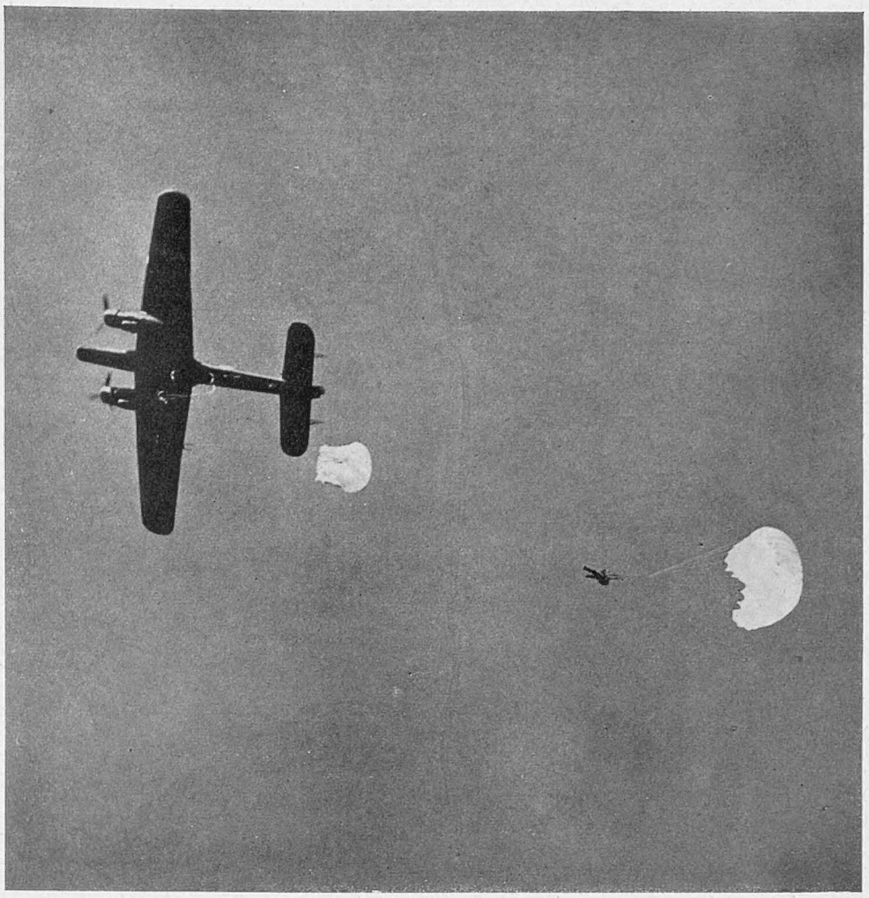
THE SUPPLIES FOLLOW THE PARACHUTISTS : The darker-coloured parachute has a long, cylindrical container—not a man—attached to it. This contains necessary supplies and is opened by the men on the ground after they have landed

TWO CLOUDS OF PARACHUTISTS : The first party of soldiers has landed—within a remarkab small area—and their parachutes are already collapsing on the ground. In the air abo them is another cloud of men on the way down—these will land almost within the sa field as the first party, and the two groups can then coalesce

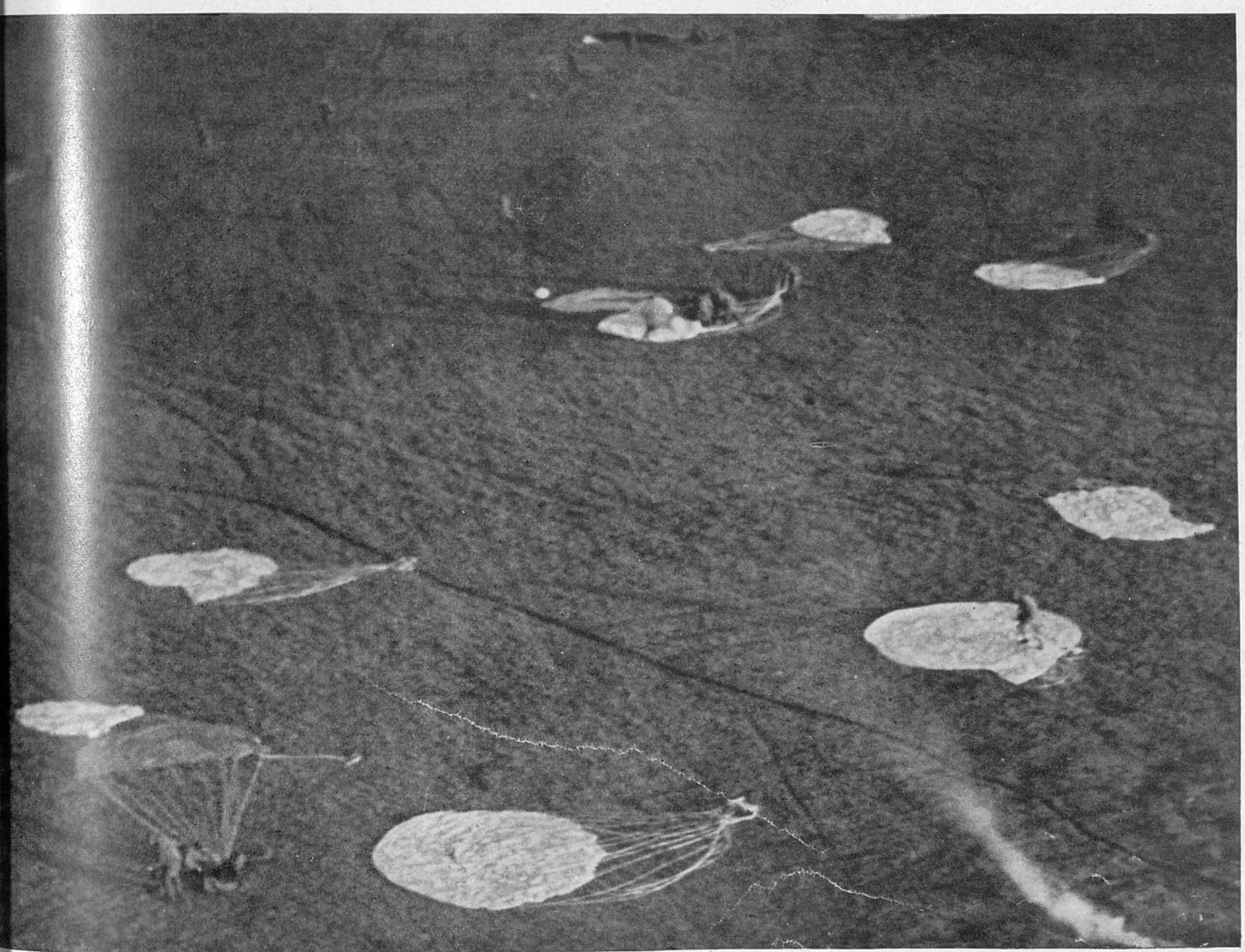
EN AND EQUIPMENT FALLING AT THE SAME TIME: With each group of men a stated number of equipment containers are also dropped. These are distinguished by their darker parachutes



HE MEN GO INTO ACTION STRAIGHT AWAY as soon as they have disposed of their parachutes; the troops prepare for the enemy, using their automatic guns to deadly effect



HOW THE MEN LEAVE THE AIRCRAFT: Only a second or two separates one man from his neighbour. The parachute opens almost before it has passed the tail of the aircraft. It is only thus that jumps can be made from the low altitude of a few hundred feet



AN IMPRESSIVE PICTURE SHOWING THE LANDING-FIELD OF THE PARACHUTISTS AS IT APPEARS FROM ABOVE. Every man has made a successful landing, and each parachute is laid out on the ground exactly as it collapsed after the parachutists had struggled out of their harness. The men, it will be observed, are already on the move, and are heading for the objectives for which they were detailed before the attack. This is the moment when training, daring and initiative will tell, and upon these factors depends the success of the parachutists' subsequent operations within the enemy's territory

BRITISH PARACHUTISTS IN TRAINING

RUBBER-HELMETED, OVERALLED N.C.O.s PREPARING FOR A MASS DROP : Parachutes are in position and gas-masks are worn at the ready. Note the parachute badge on the shoulder

STUDY OF A PARACHUTIST : Fully equipped, and with an automatic gun in place of a rifle

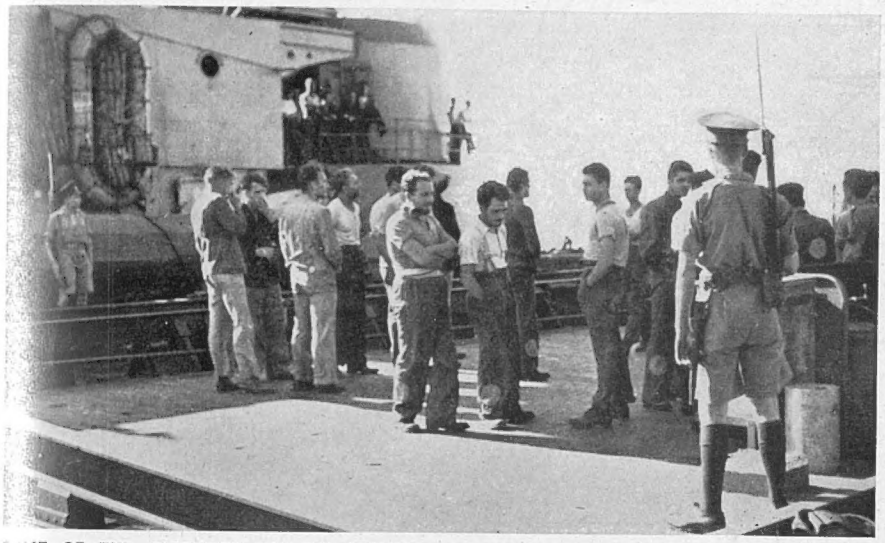
A TROOPER WITH THE CONTAINER IN WHICH A PIGEON IS CARRIED, for conveying messages back to the base

THE PIGEON CARRIED BY THE PARACHUTIST : On landing, this bird will be released to convey back to Headquarters details of the progress achieved

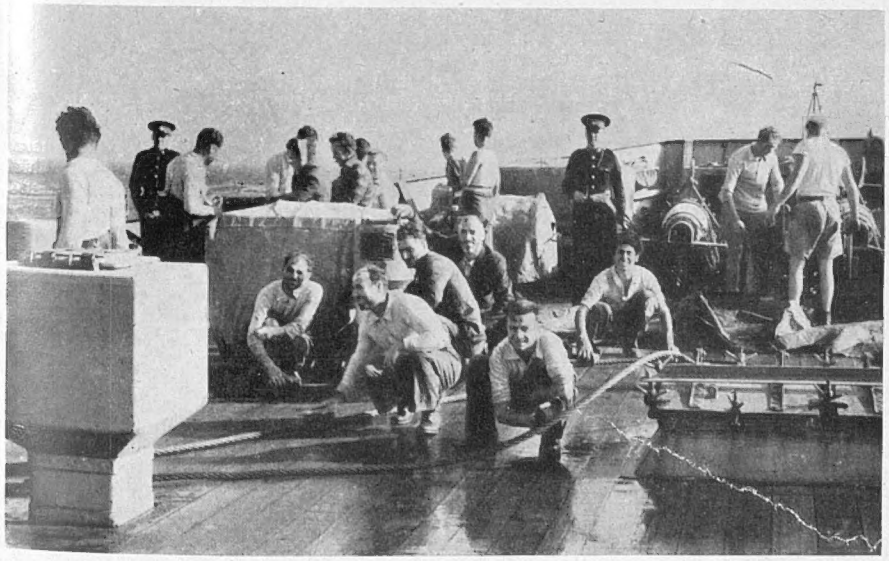
GETTING READY FOR THE FLIGHT TO THE POINT OF ATTACK : Picked men of the Parachute Corps harnessing each other up : there must be no mistake with the complicated parachute straps! Every man has been specially selected before being sent for training, and each receives extra pay because of the difficult and dangerous nature of the work

OFFICER PRISONERS, SOME IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES WITH IDENTIFICATION PATCHES, being exercised on the battleship's quarter-deck during the voyage

The ENEMY COME ABOARD a BRITISH WARSHIP



SOME OF THE CAPTURED ITALIAN SEAMEN, under close guard, parade on the deck for exercise. For these men the war is now over—and it does not appear that they resent it!



LIGHT EXERCISE FOR GERMANS AND ITALIANS: Scrubbing wire hawsers on the upper deck—a work to which the prisoners are reported to have looked forward during the voyage

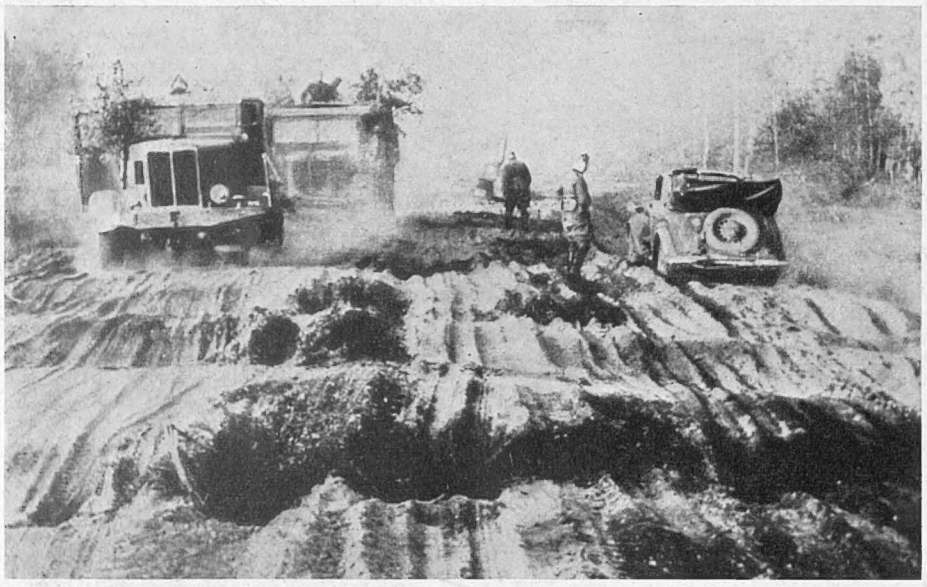
As stated on a previous page, the men shown in these pictures are now prisoners of war in our hands. They were taken off captured enemy submarines and merchantmen; and during their voyage to port, for transference to internment camps, they were treated with far more kindness than would have been shown to our own men by the Germans. The light work they were called upon to do the men apparently enjoyed. The officers were kept separate from the men and were exercised on the quarter-deck. Those of the prisoners who were wearing civilian clothes had identification patches sewn on to indicate their new status

HOW THE PRISONERS CAME ABOARD: A boatload of prisoners in a small vessel coming alongside the British battleship

TYPES OF OFFICER PRISONERS—naval men and the crews of merchant vessels—mustered on the battleship's deck

THE SECOND CAPITAL OF SOVIET RUSSIA: "REVOLUTION SQUARE," IN THE CENTRE OF KUIBISHEV, chief city of the province of the same name, to which many of the Government departments and foreign embassies have now been transferred

Formerly known as Samara, Kuibishev stands on the River Volga at its junction with the River Samara, some hundreds of miles to the east of Moscow. It is to this city that most of the Soviet Government departments and all the foreign embassies in Russia have now been transferred. It is a town of wide streets and squares, of fine public buildings and blocks of workers' flats, of busy factories and riverside docks. It was founded in 1586-91, primarily to protect the water-borne traffic on the Volga: in 1918 the city was seized by the Czechoslovaks, who formed an army composed of ex-prisoners of war



"CONDITIONS ON THE EASTERN FRONT ARE APPALLING," SAY THE NAZIS: "The armies are struggling in seas of mud," according to one of the Nazi communiqués. Here is a picture which shows how right the Germans are—for once! Lorries and cars are struggling to advance through the mud and churned-up earth which, in places, is axle-deep. In some places road communications have broken down entirely

THE NEW COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE MOSCOW FRONT: General Gregory Zhukov, formerly Vice-Commissar for Defence and Chief of the Soviet General Staff. He is Russia's greatest fortress and defence-work expert and was formerly Commander at Kiev

A SCENE FROM THE THREATENED CITY OF ROSTOV-ON-DON: Taken in a block of flats in the Black Sea port of Rostov, this picture shows the tenants meeting to prepare a "collective" parcel of comforts to send to their townsmen now at the front

TWO SOVIET WOMEN AIR ACES NOW FIGHTING AT THE FRONT: Polina Ossipenko and Valentina Grizodubova, joint holders of the long-distance international flying record, who are both at the front

TO-DAY IN MOSCOW: THE MANESHNAIA ULIZA, OR "STABLES STREET": The building in the right foreground was a livery stable under the Czars. To the left, opposite, are the offices of Kalinin, President of the U.S.S.R. The tall white building in the middle distance is the Moscow Hotel, where foreigners visiting the capital are accommodated. The original plan was to convert the livery stables into a central garage

THE HOME OF THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS ON OCHOTNY RIAD: This picture was taken from the roof-garden of the Moscow Hotel (which is also seen in the picture on the left). In the centre background is seen the Hotel National, and to the left of this is the American Embassy. The building of the People's Commissars was erected on the site of a shrine, to which frequent pilgrimages were formerly made by the Russian people

THE RUSSIA OF TO-DAY

By JAMES BELLAMY

(who lived for many years in that country, and who is one of the few Englishmen to have served in the Red Army)

THE Russian Revolution did not begin in 1917, nor did it end in that year. In 1940 it was still proceeding, having passed into a phase of tolerance and stability from which, in the hearts of all its friends abroad, great things were hoped. There have been few more terrible tragedies in history than the battle now raging from Murmansk to the Sea of Azov. A few more years would have seen the final triumph of a great experiment in social theory—a triumph displayed not in the ultimate enthronement of extremism, but in the return of a great people to moderation and normality after achieving, not without sorrow and violence, advances of fundamental importance to human thought.

Stalinism as a policy meant the abandonment of world revolution as a Soviet aim; a return to normal monetary policy within the Union; and, in some ways the most important, an attitude of tolerance to all who were faithful to the new regime.

In 1929 Stalin made considerable changes in the wage policy of the Soviet Union. Till then, with the exception of a few specialists, the workers were paid more or less the same wage, and it was a fixed rule that Communist Party members could not earn more than 450 roubles a month, no matter what their positions. A factory director or skilled engineer would, if he were a Communist, earn no more, and indeed sometimes less, than his assistant. Stalin's new policy embodied three principles: equal pay for equal work; the harder you work the better your pay; and lastly, that privilege should be the reward of responsibility. Efficiency at once improved all round. Theatre tickets were a frequent bonus to the conscientious worker, and there were also food parcels containing tea and sugar, preserved meats, and other delicacies which were the reward of increased output. These *pyoks*, as they were called, were distributed by the management committees on which there sat elected representatives of the workers. The "Stakanoff System"—the creation of industrial shock-troops who stepped-up production wherever it was lagging—grew from the new policy and was a tremendous success. But far more important than the rewards they received was the increased dignity of those chosen to lead in the workshops.

Money has now much the same place in Soviet economy as in the outside world, with this difference—that though a man may spend what he earns as he likes, he may not *invest* it—that is, he cannot use money to get power. The dividends payable from Government loans are small, usually reinvested, and when finally distributed, say in twenty years' time, are to be expended on such things as a six-months' travel holiday for the good citizen. To live on investments is unthinkable to the modern Russian—the words have no meaning to him. If a man wastes his money and does not pay his rent, the Housing Committee where he lives report him to the factory committee, who attach his wages; but such cases are extremely rare. Rent is rarely more than two per cent. of income. Sports, such as yachting, are organised by the workers' clubs. If the club activity is beneficial to national defence—gliding and parachute-jumping, for example—the club is subsidised. No man can own a yacht or a glider; he pays his club dues and takes his turn with the rest. The clubs are centred round the factory or office and are entirely democratic in their methods. Some of them, notably the "Dynamo Club" of Moscow, have magnificent premises and recreation grounds.

The Communist Party member still thinks and teaches that "Religion is the opium of the people," let there be no mistake about that; but he is discouraged from inflicting his views unduly upon good citizens who think otherwise; and freedom of worship is openly proclaimed as a fundamental part of national policy.

Indeed, it is the proud assertion of the modern Communist that worship is freer now than it ever was under the Czar. Then in the six greatest cities of Russia, on the grounds of their especial holiness, no Jewish place of worship was permitted, since this, said the Church, would be a direct affront to Christ. To-day there are flourishing synagogues in Leningrad and Moscow, and thousands of Jews enjoy complete religious freedom.

This wise tolerance means that once again human thought is reaching safe harbour after a period of storm. It was in 1926 that Yaroslavsky began active work on the anti-God campaign. He was a man of simple life, high principle, and considerable gentleness. In his eyes the Russian Church was the enemy of the Revolution, and had for years practised shameful deceits upon the credulous common people. To expose such frauds was to him a plain duty. But his method was based on persuasion rather than persecution; and it is worth pointing out that had persecution been carried out in the years preceding on anything like the scale the enemies of Russia (among them Adolf Hitler) suggest, there would have been few churches left for Yaroslavsky to work on.

On Easter Day at midnight cinema projectors were set up outside some of the principal churches to show anti-religious propaganda films, the points of which were enforced by much oratory. But the crowds still flocked to midnight Mass. Museums were opened in which the sins of the Church, unfortunately many, were displayed with great skill. It never seemed to me that any but young people were much affected, and these in fewer numbers than had been hoped.

All over Russia to-day millions of people are peacefully worshipping as they please. The priests have been re-enfranchised, for the economic system is now so secure that no counter-propaganda is feared. Irish-American Communists, moved by the grandeur of the ritual, have been seen remembering their childhood and kneeling before the ikons. A few Communists may have smiled, but there were none who sneered.

There is some fear in the Party that Lenin may achieve sainthood. The fact that he is embalmed makes some credulous peasants think that there has been a miraculous arrest of decay. Pamphlets were distributed to combat this belief. "Our glorious Lenin is preserved not by a miracle, but by Science." General Budenny used to tell of one old peasant who thought this over carefully and then said: "Where can I get a jar of this 'science,' comrade? We 've some posts that could do with it down on our farm." A sentence like that marks the transition between the old Russia and the new. If the British Empire stands loyally beside its great ally each Power may share the discoveries of the other. The joint tradition of economic, personal and spiritual freedom thus created may go far to shape the future of mankind.

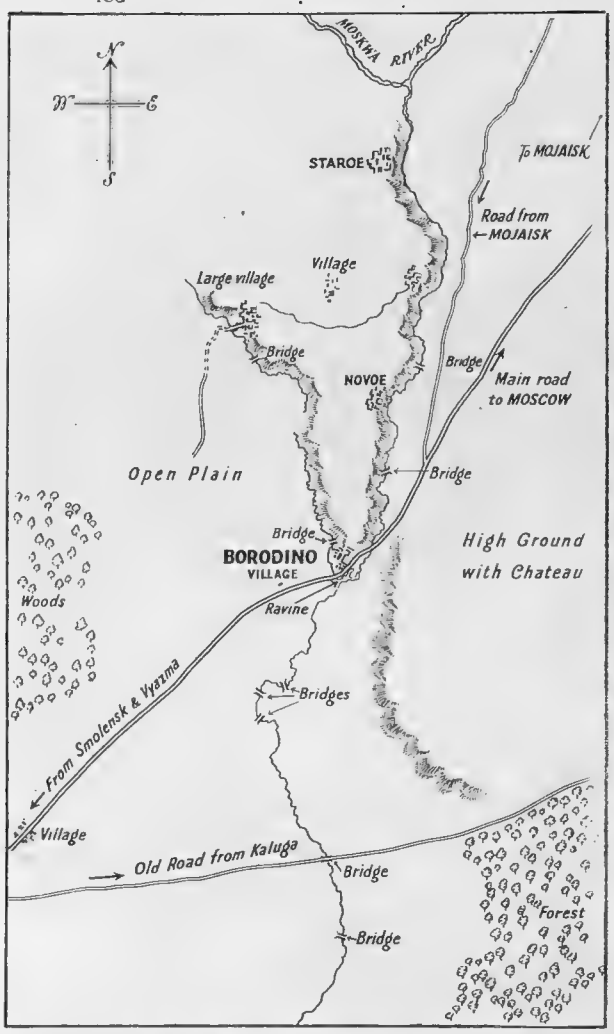
SVERDLOV SQUARE IN THE EARLY SPRING: Snow is still lying on the ground. Sverdlov was the first President of the U.S.S.R., Kalinin is the second. In the top left-hand corner is the Bolshoi Theatre: in the centre is "Mostorg," the communal stores (the Woolworth of Moscow): the white building is the Military Academy. The man carrying a map is a lieutenant coming from a technical course: the man with a child is typical of a factory worker on rest day. The dog, it might be mentioned, is a very unusual sight in Moscow!

AN OPEN-AIR CAFÉ IN PUSHKIN SQUARE: The notice in the top left-hand corner reads "Coffee and lemonade." The Boulevard in the background runs down to the river, and then circles Moscow. This café is run on ordinary commercial lines—it is open to anyone who can pay the very moderate prices

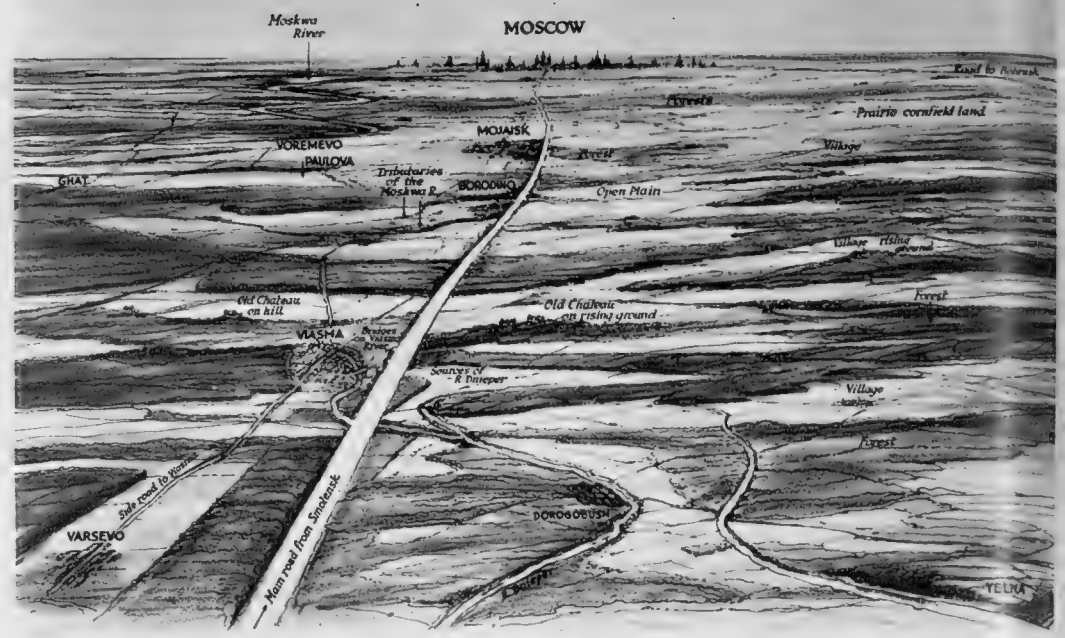
A YACHT PASSING A STEAMBOAT STATION ON THE EIGHTY-MILE MOSCOW-VOLGA CANAL: This canal was only recently completed. The yacht probably belongs to a factory "sailing club." There is no private ownership, but every encouragement is given to clubs, many of which are subsidised by the State if their activities are likely to prove useful in national defence

b

THE ROADS TO MOSCOW AND THE OIL CENTRES



A FAMOUS SPOT ON THE ROAD TO MOSCOW : Borodino, where Napoleon's advance was checked in 1812 (See notes on right)



THE BATTLEGROUND IN FRONT OF MOSCOW : The area to the west of the Russian capital which has witnessed the severest fighting the world has ever known—*Drawing by Percy Home*

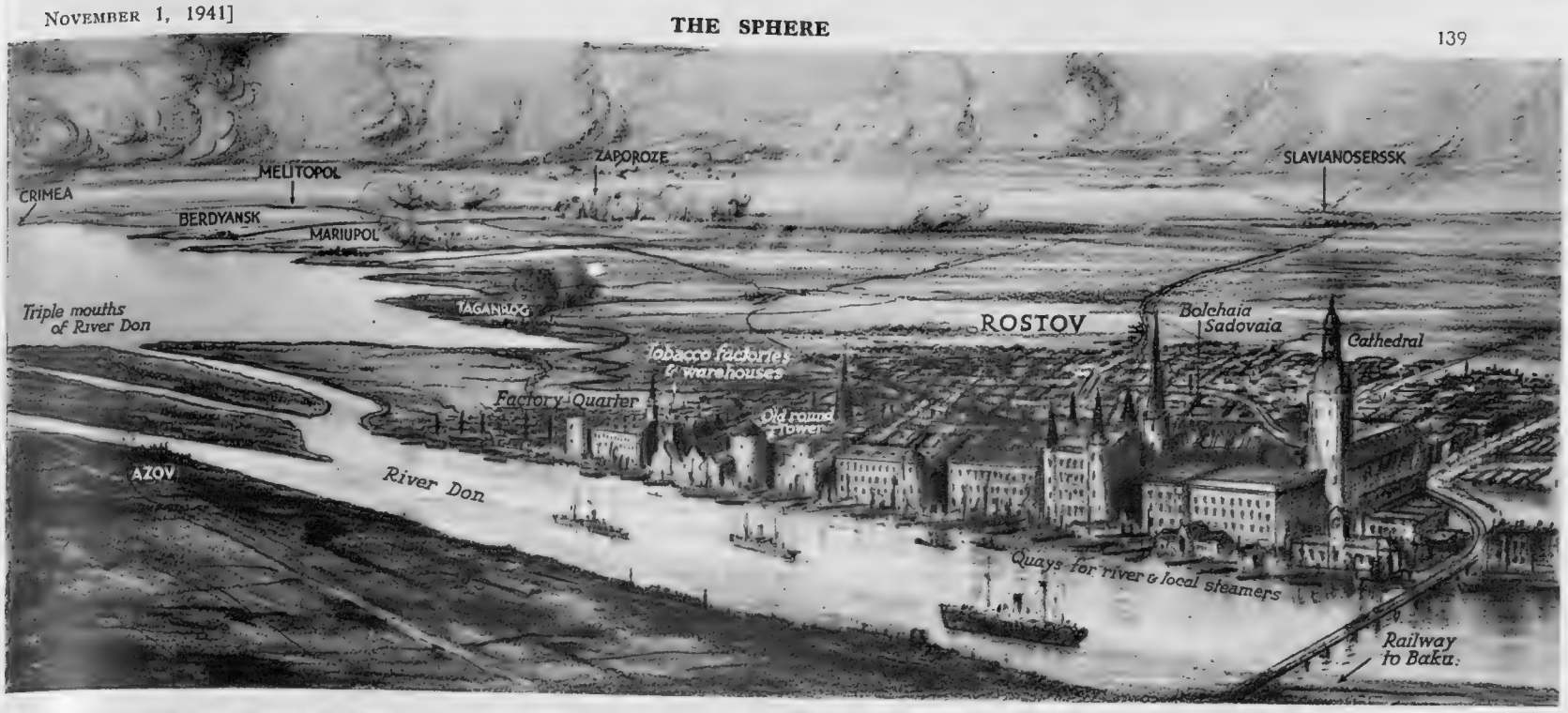
On left—It was at Borodino that the Russians checked Napoleon's advance on September 7, 1812. The battle was a desperate one, resulting in huge casualties. The Russians occupied the foreground, being placed on rising ground : facing them, and separating General Koutousoff's army from the French, was a deep ravine. The main road from Smolensk to Moscow also ran parallel with the battle-front. Napoleon's forces stormed the ridge which had been held by Cossacks, and thereafter advanced by way of Mojaisk, with results known to all the world !

Above—The way to Moscow lies over a great plain, diversified by masses of forest which are separated by wide stretches of open country. The general level is broken here and there by low hills, from which it is possible to obtain an extended view of the surrounding country. Napoleon and his generals used them in order to study the movements of the Russian army under General Koutousoff. It is interesting to note that Napoleon arrived at Dorogobush on August 21, in the fateful year of 1812. In front of him lay Viasma, which was burnt by the Russians before the arrival of the invader. In front of Viasma lies a dense mass of forest country, the trees growing so close together that no tank could pass through them. Some of the villages of this region are visible as one looks towards the capital from Viasma, which "stands on a beautiful eminence, commanding the plains and the defile through which passes the high road from Smolensk." Further to the north lie Paulova and Voremevo. Passing along the main highway (along which the Germans declared that their mechanised forces were bowling "four abreast" towards Moscow), Mojaisk is reached at a point about 65 miles from the capital ; and near here, too, is Borodino, the famous town overlooking the ravine around which the Battle of Borodino was fought in September 1812. Two streams, tributaries of the Moskva River, which flows through Moscow, meet here. There is here a sharply rising mass of high ground, with forests to the right and with wide patches of open country. At intervals along the road are villages, both large and small ; and on the low hills are the remains of chateaux once occupied by the Russian nobility. Between Mojaisk and Moscow there is no place of any importance, and the broad highway runs straight to its goal. In the fighting for the Russian capital, it might be stated that the battles—and the casualties—have been on a scale never before witnessed in the world

HOW THE RUSSIAN DEFENCES HAVE BEEN BUILT : A Soviet "bunker," or concrete-topped pill-box, with slits for the defenders' guns. Many heroic stands have been made in these defence posts by the Russians

THE R.A.F. WING IN RUSSIA : British pilots examine a useful item of equipment exhibited by a Soviet sailor. Despite the difficulties of language, our men are getting along nicely with their Russian Allies !

THE SCENE OF SOME OF THE HEAVIEST FIGHTING IN THE BATTLE FOR MOSCOW : This picture comes from Briansk, the Russian town 240 miles to the south-west of the capital ; it shows some of the modern houses built by the Soviet for its factory workers : these houses and flats were equipped with every modern convenience. It is now not unlikely that this street is in ruins, for at Briansk the fighting was of the severest, the town changing hands many times before its final evacuation by the Russians



ROSTOV ON THE DON, THE SEAPORT TWENTY-SEVEN MILES UP THE DON RIVER FROM THE BLACK SEA and the key to the rich oil-bearing region of the Caucasus towards which the German hordes are now pressing—*Drawing by Percy Home*

THE THREAT TO THE CAUCASUS OIL REGION: With the new German advances to Rostov, this area is now immediately threatened. Maikop, Grozny and Baku are oil centres of the greatest importance within this region

Held up in front of Moscow, with their plans for the capture of the Russian capital in arrears, the Germans have been advancing at a rapid rate through the Southern Ukraine. Now they stand at the very gates of the Caucasus, threatening to isolate that rich area by an advance southwards through Rostov, and an advance eastwards along the Don to Astrakhan and the Caspian. As we have pointed out in previous issues of *The Sphere*, the area from Rostov to the Iran frontier is of the very greatest importance, for here are to be found the Maikop, Grozny and Baku oilfields. Events in this region will have a great effect on the future progress of the campaign: and at the moment of writing it looks as if the position here is a grave one. Rostov itself has been described as "a place of shops." Since the Revolution it has been developed into one of the most important centres in the whole of Southern Russia. It has a population of half a million, and is the administrative, political, economic and cultural centre of the Northern Caucasus. All the Central Regional Headquarters are here, including the head offices of the various trusts, banks, syndicates and collective farms. It is connected north and south by a railway line which now possesses the highest strategic value. A study of the accompanying map will show at a glance the geographical importance of this great centre

IN THE HEART OF ROSTOV-ON-DON, the administrative and economic centre of the Northern Caucasus

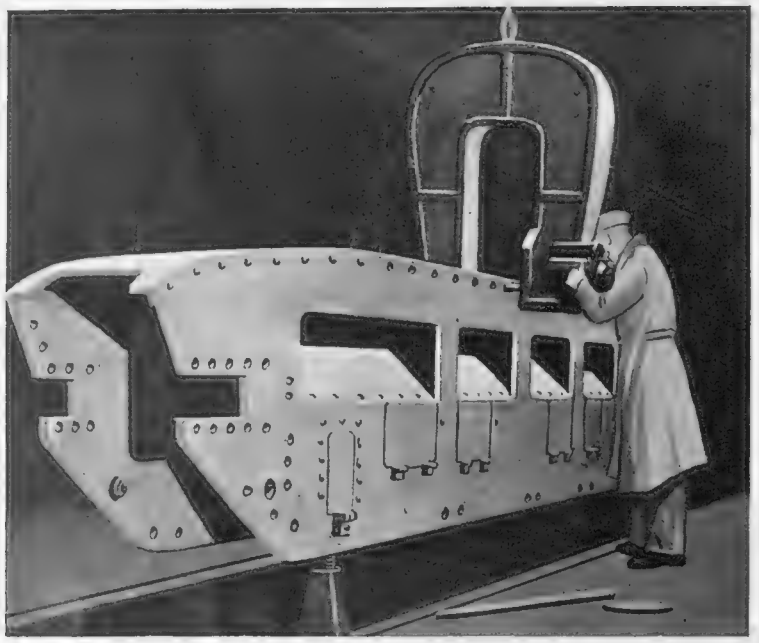
This is a city of nearly half a million souls: not only is it an important river port only 27 miles from the mouth of the Don River, but it is a vital railway junction, connecting the Caucasus with Russia. With the capture of Taganrog, the Germans have advanced to its very gates and (with the capture of other cities) are threatening to cut off the oil-bearing areas to the south, a very serious eventuality. This picture shows Theatrical Square in Rostov: to the left is the Maxim Gorki Theatre, one of the most beautiful and largest theatres in the Soviet Union

TANKS and MORE TANKS:

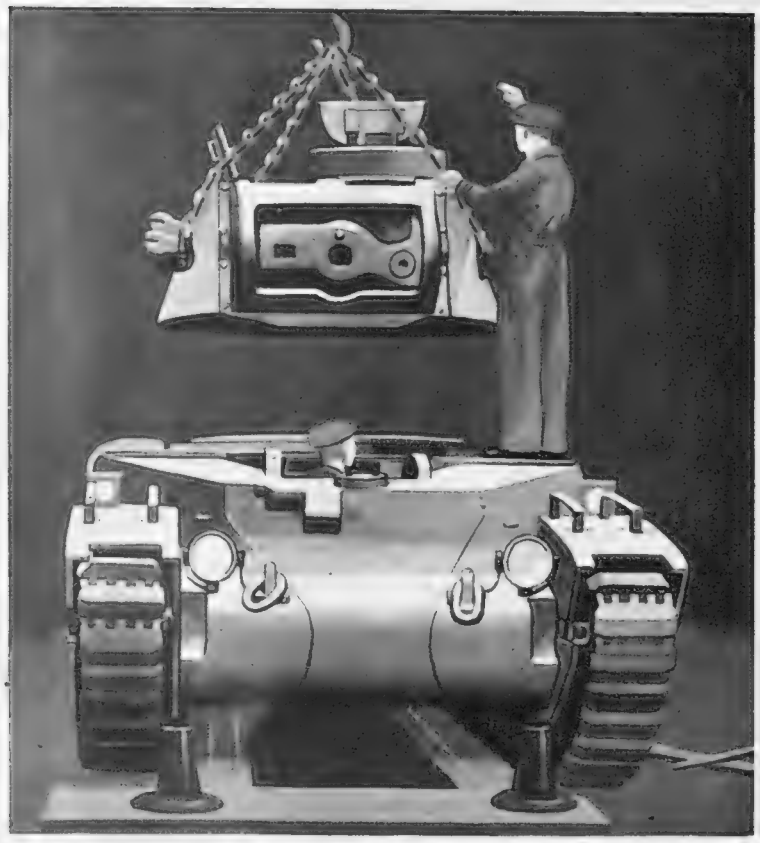
THE series of pictures reproduced here show how the tank, known throughout the Service as the Matilda (or the No. 1 Infantry Tank, Mark IIA), is assembled in sections. Hundreds of factories throughout Britain are now engaged in tank production, and many more factories are to be taken over for this task. Lord Beaverbrook, Minister of Supply, whose main energies have recently been concentrated on the work of producing more and more tanks—both for Britain and for the Soviet—recently announced that a drive for 30,000 is to be made. This means that some 200,000,000 component parts and some 500,000 tons of steel will be needed!

Designed for dispersal production, the Matilda is now being made in many parts of the country. Although not the very latest type (some of the newer examples have already been illustrated in these pages), it is a very useful war machine, whose worth was well proved in Libya. In the larger factories the machines are built on the assembly-line principle, and the stages of construction are as follows: setting

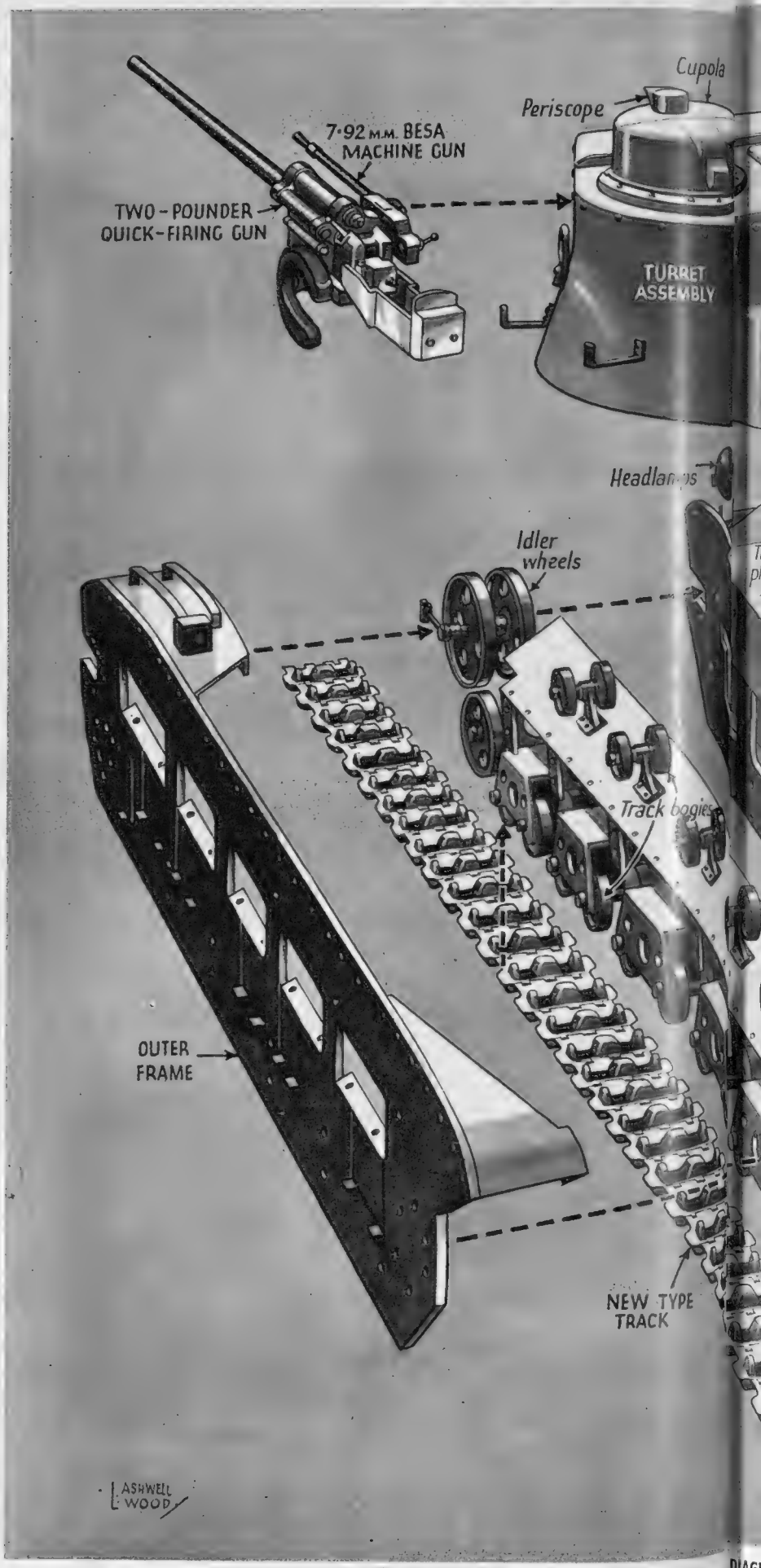
THE WOMEN ENGAGED ON TANK PRODUCTION: A young worker is here burring-over joints in the front armour-plating. Sixty per cent. of the new tank production is to be done by women



AUTOMATIC RIVETING: Here the outer frame is being riveted in position to the main frame. All this work is done very quickly with an electric automatic riveter. Thousands of rivets are used in a single tank and constitute a considerable part of its total weight!



FIXING THE TURRET: The complete turret assembly is lowered on to the turret foundation-ring and fixed in position. This is an advanced stage of production. Afterwards the tank is lowered on to its tracks and is then ready for testing. The armament is fitted last of all



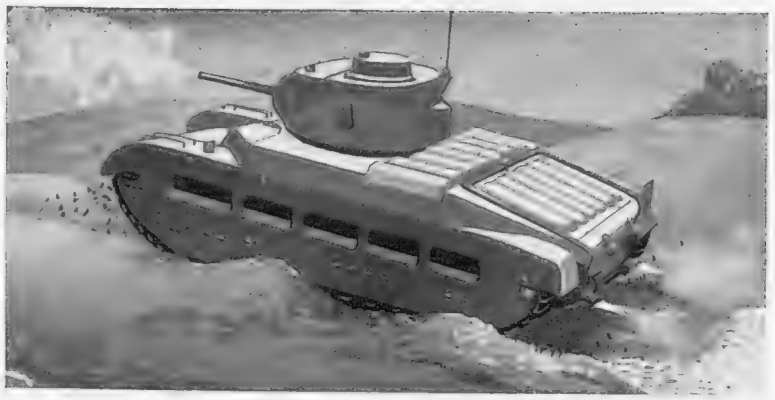
HOW A TANK IS BUILT UP: A COMPLETE

This drawing has been exclusively prepared for *The Sphere*. It shows the main components of the tank, which are made in various parts of the country and then brought together for final assembly in the manner shown here. The larger tank factories, however, make

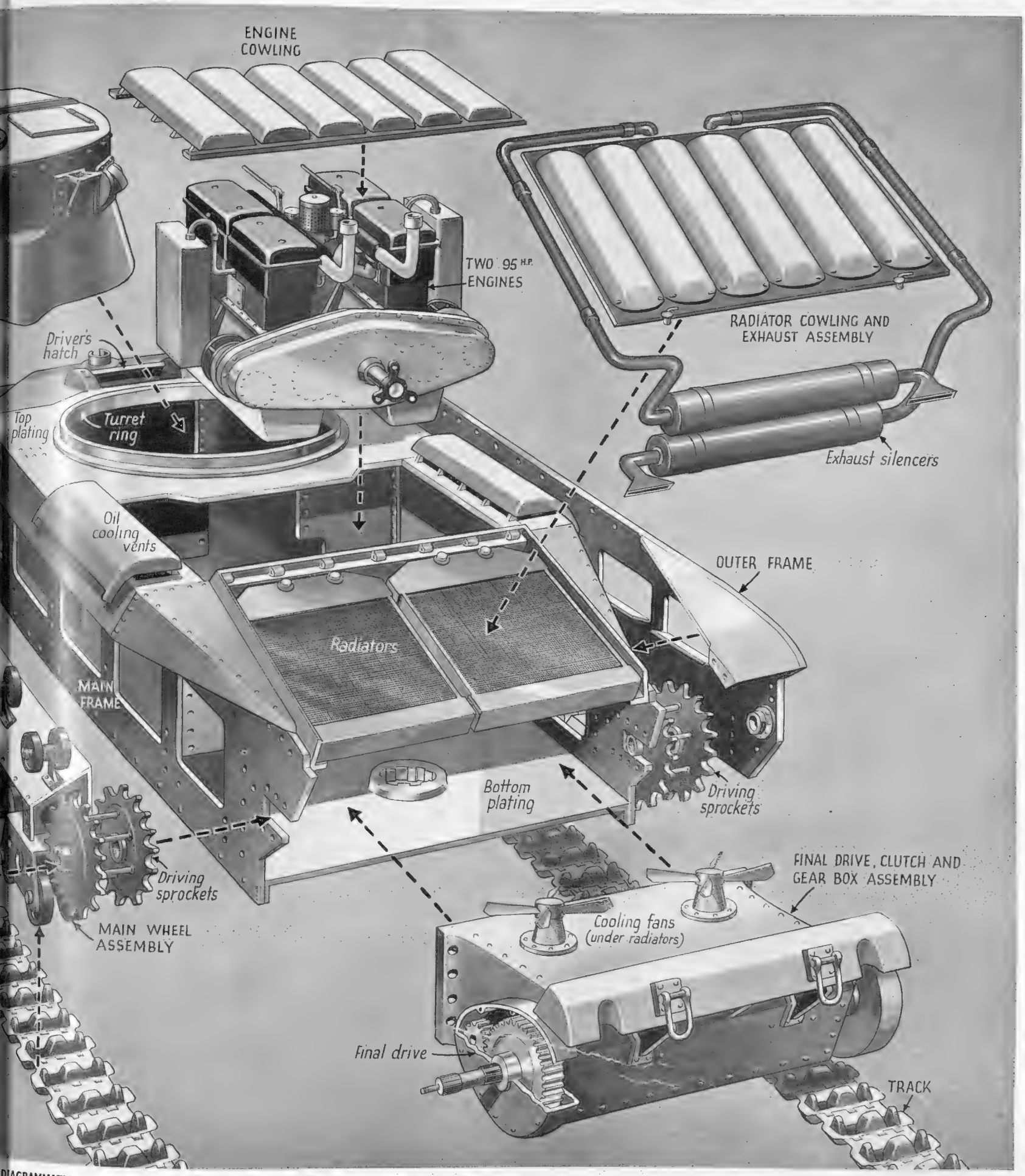
How the Various Parts are Assembled

(Described and Illustrated by L. Ashwell Wood)

up and levelling the main frames, with the traverse members fitted also; fitting top and bottom plating; bogie wheels and frames and driving sprockets; outer frames fitted; front plates and driver's compartment; engine and gear-box assembly fitted; radiators and cooling cowling added; exhaust system fitted. Then the turret is lowered on, and all the wiring of the controls fitted, etc. The whole is then lowered on to the track and driven out for testing; after this, the guns are fitted and tested. In addition to the guns shown in the lower drawing, there are others whose disposition is a secret. The Matilda is then ready for the enemy, who will certainly find it a formidable adversary in the field.

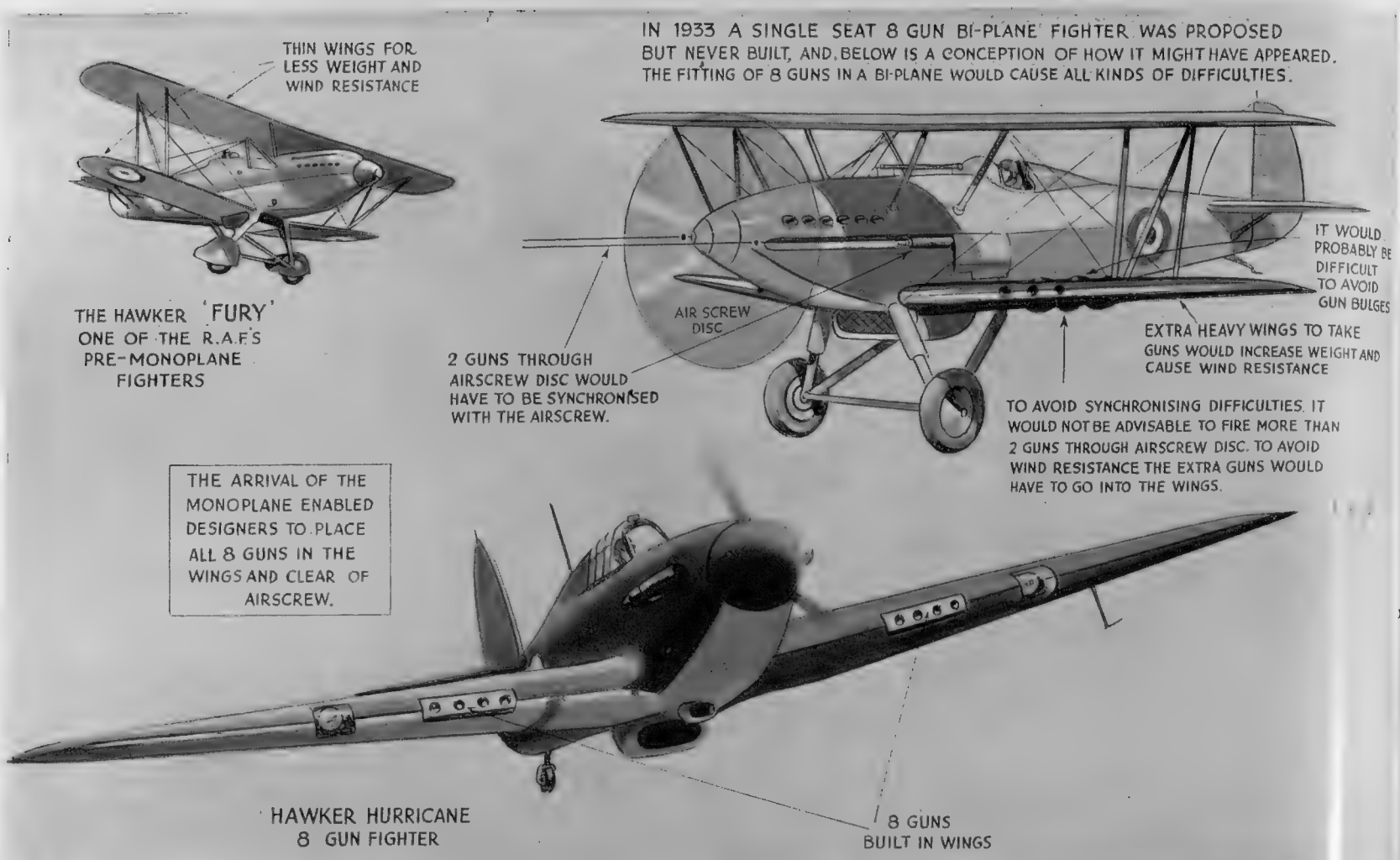


On right—**THE COMPLETED MATILDA:** All the parts are in their place, and exhaustive tests are carried out before handing over to the Army. Rough ground is traversed during these tests, and firing results are carefully observed



DIAGRAMMATIC EXPOSITION OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NO. 1 INFANTRY TANK, MARK IIA, OR "MATILDA"

the complete article—except for the guns and the engines. Besides these main components, there are, of course, thousands of small parts too complicated and secret to be shown here. In the new drive for 30,000 tanks which Lord Beaverbrook has just announced, 200,000,000 component parts will be required. The Matilda, when fully completed and equipped, weighs 25 cons: in addition to the guns shown here, it has others of a secret disposition



FROM FURY TO HURRICANE, OR FROM BIPLANE TO MONOPLANE: The R.A.F.'s original fighter aircraft were biplanes; to-day, without exception, the fastest and most deadly are monoplanes—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

The BIRTH of the 8-GUN FIGHTER

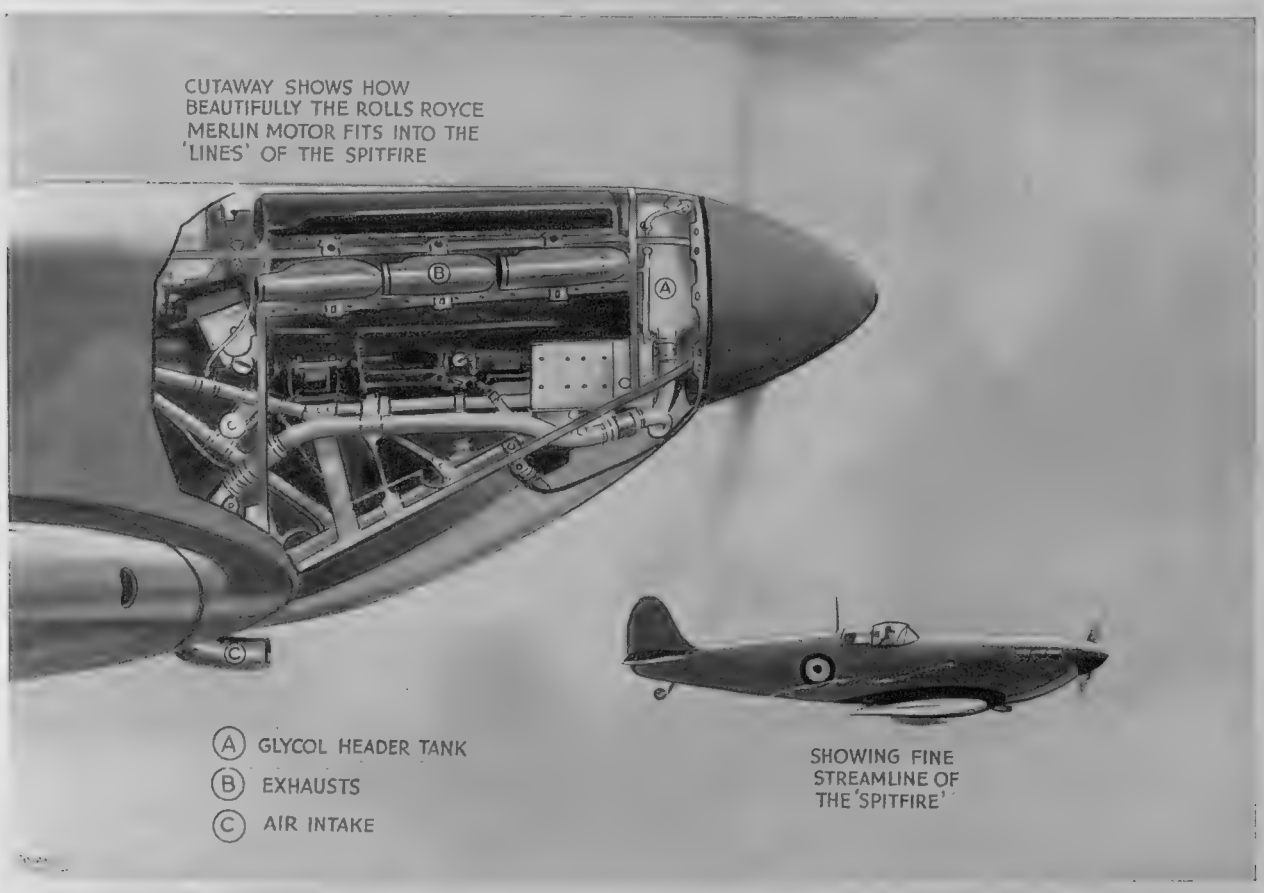
And Its Development into the World's Deadliest Fighter Aircraft

Up to the year 1933, the R.A.F.'s fighter aircraft were biplanes, and the Fury, built by Hawker's, was a leading example. In 1933, a single-seat, eight-gun biplane fighter was proposed—but it was never built. In the *upper right-hand* drawing is a conception of how this aircraft might have appeared: the fitting of eight guns in a biplane would, however, have caused all kinds of difficulties, for the reasons indicated. The arrival of the monoplane at about this time enabled aircraft designers to place all their eight guns in the wing, well clear of the airscrew, and thus helped to solve many of their difficulties

AT a time which marks the anniversary of the defeat and final rout of the *Luftwaffe* in their major daylight attacks upon England of last year, it is fitting that we should remember how much we owe to the Hurricane and Spitfire and the men who designed them and those who worked for the incorporation of these aircraft in the Royal Air Force.

The decisions which come to affect the balance between two air Powers are taken long before the opposing aircraft exchange fire. The tactics of air fighting to-day are vastly influenced by the designing board of yesterday. It was certainly this aspect of air warfare which was most strikingly emphasised in the Battle of Britain. The fact that we possessed at such a crucial moment a fighter of such performance that small numbers were able to establish superiority over anything the enemy could send over, is a grand tribute to the men who foresaw in the developments of modern bombers the need for a fighter of superlative quality as a defensive weapon.

It is as well to establish a picture of what would have happened had the *Luftwaffe* had their way. First, our advance aerodromes would have been destroyed, together with such aircraft as were grounded there. Then, attacks would have been made on our more distant aerodromes, our fighters meanwhile being shot out of the sky. Then our ports, harbours, towns and cities would have been systematically and methodically bombed until the horrors of Warsaw and Rotterdam were reproduced a thousandfold. Then . . . with the way cleared, would have come the final onslaught on the island.



THE ENGINE DESIGNERS COME TO THE HELP OF THE AIRCRAFT DESIGNERS—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

It was the British engine designers who finally made possible the terrific performance of the eight-gun fighters of the Battle of Britain. In the Rolls-Royce Merlin II, "the designers of the Hurricane and Spitfire were given that performance, power and, above all, shape which enabled them to produce the clean streamline of Fighter Command's first aircraft which would fly in excess of 300 m.p.h., fire eight instead of four guns and climb higher." The cut-away drawing shows how beautifully the Rolls-Royce Merlin motor fits into the lines of the Spitfire

THE FIRST MINUTE.—The birth of the eight-gun fighter can be traced for all practical purposes to a blue foolscap minute within the red covers of a secret Air Ministry file. In considering the eventual replacement of the Fury and Bulldog this minute was submitted setting out the performance of a fighter with four, six or eight guns. This was on April 4, 1933. It was signed by the late Wing-Commander A. T. Williams.

The Fury replacement, as then contemplated as a biplane, could take one of three forms: four, six and eight guns. The estimated comparison of performance was given as:

	4-Gun	*6-Gun*	*8-Gun*
Maximum speed	265 m.p.h.	261 m.p.h.	256 m.p.h.
Climb to 20,000 ft.	7·8 mins.	8·2 mins.	8·6 mins.
Service ceiling	37,500 ft.	36,500 ft.	35,400 ft.
Endurance	1·7 hrs.	1·7 hrs.	1·7 hrs.

(These figures bear no relation to present-day performances)

These performance figures were only paper estimates, however, and were not far enough in advance of what the aircraft then building could do. This project, therefore, was not continued. The question still remained: "How was the future menace of the day- and night-bomber to be met by fighter aircraft?" Discussion went on over the compromise of a day- and night-fighter. Would this aircraft, however, have sufficient performance and hitting

AIR VICE-MARSHAL R. S. SORLEY, O.B.E., D.S.C., D.F.C., Assistant Chief of Staff, who has been prominently connected with the development of the eight-gun fighter since its inception

power for day fighting on the one hand and sufficient endurance and ability to locate the enemy at night on the other? One alternative was to concentrate on a high-performance single-seater for day fighting.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE MONOPLANE.—Much else was discussed after the first minute of 1933 had broached the subject. The pros and cons of the four- and six- as against the eight-gun fighter had to be thrashed out, and some opposition overcome, one of the objections being that the extra armament would have the effect of making the aircraft too slow to be of practical use and would abnormally increase head resistance. But by that time the advent of the monoplane had made possible the installation of all eight guns within the wings, with less adverse effect upon performance. This also brought about a new departure from previous practice in that all guns could be mounted clear of the airscrew disc and so eliminate the need for synchronised guns firing through the airscrew. In the light of his investigations, new predictions were then submitted by Air Vice-Marshal R. S. Sorley, then a Squadron Leader engaged on staff work in connection with operational requirements, showing that the extra guns meant the loss of only 1 m.p.h., an extra ·4 second in the time taken to reach 20,000 ft. and a service ceiling of only 1,000 ft. less. (These figures again have no relation to present-day performance.) The experts decided that these slight losses were more than counter-balanced by the great advantage of the additional guns, the objective being to obtain a decisive result in combat in as short a period as possible. This period was taken to be two seconds of fire, as it was estimated that in war the average pilot would be able to hold his sights steadily on his target for no more than two seconds at a time. With eight guns a density of fire would be built up which should prove lethal.

THE CLAIMS OF THE CANNON.—About this time the development of the Hispano "moteur-cannon" in France somewhat complicated the issue, because it was claimed that only one hit by this gun would be required to prove fatal. This gun was then in its infancy, and had at that time the disadvantage that for purposes of rigidity it had to be mounted on the engine and fired through the airscrew boss. The argument was whether the chances of hitting the enemy with one gun of this calibre were as good as with eight machine-guns. This again was well thrashed out, and a decision was taken at a conference held at the Air Ministry in August 1934. It was not until November 1934 that a final specification was sent out by the Air Ministry setting out the requirement—"eight machine-guns."

To the late R. J. Mitchell of Vickers, Ltd., and Mr. Sydney Camm of Hawker Aircraft Ltd., both famous designers, much of the credit goes for the development and ultimate adoption of the eight-gun fighter. Belief in the ability of these two men played a large part in determining Air Vice-Marshal Sorley's strong attitude. These two men were untiring in their efforts to produce the machines which ultimately were to do so much to beat back the Nazi hordes.

AN ENGINE TO FIT.—There would have been little chance, however, of these aircraft becoming the scourge of the *Luftwaffe* in the British skies during the summer of 1940 if British engineering had not at the same time produced a superlative liquid-cooled engine. In the Rolls-Royce Merlin II the designers of the Spitfire and Hurricane were given that performance, power, and, above all, shape which enabled them to produce the clear streamline of Fighter Command's first aircraft which would fly in excess of 300 m.p.h., fire eight instead of four guns, and climb higher than any operational aircraft had done before

If this revolutionary change of policy in aircraft design had not been decided upon we might have found ourselves with fighters insufficiently armed to deal with the German bombers put into production soon after Hitler came to power. British design and foresight proved a match for German mass planning and ruthlessness. This courageous decision, with all its attendant risks, was more than justified, the words "*Achtung, Schpitfeuer!*" becoming the death-knell of hundreds of the *Luftwaffe's* finest pilots.

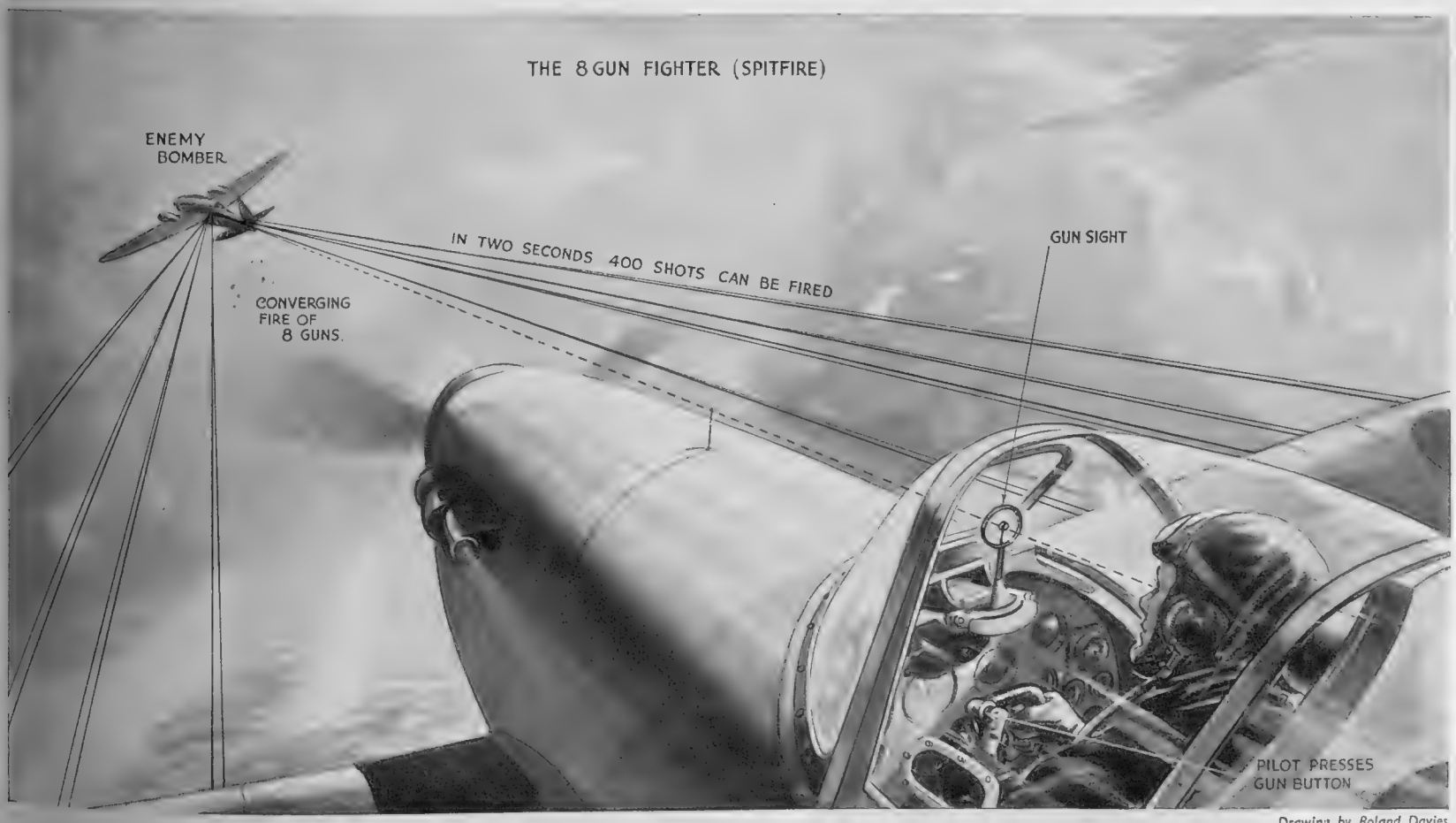
CONTINUITY OF SERVICE.—Wing-Commander Arthur Trafalgar Williams died in 1934, a little more than a year after he had first introduced eight guns into official discussions on fighter requirements. He had followed his aeronautical bent from the Army into the R.F.C. in 1916. He saw much active service, but his career in the R.A.F. generally tended towards the technical side, where his strongest interest lay.

Air Vice-Marshal Sorley entered the R.N.A.S. in the early months of the last war before he was seventeen. Daring attacks on the German warships *Goeben* and *Breslau* won him the D.S.C., and he earned his D.F.C. for gallantry in fifty-four bombing raids When he was able to develop his R.A.F. career at the close of hostilities he took a keen interest in experimental work and general research and development. He was the 1935 winner of the Gordon Sheppard Memorial Essay and was awarded £200 by the Inventions Awards Committee for introducing the container method of carrying bombs on aircraft.

He came to the Air Ministry from the Aeroplane Armament Experimental Establishment in June 1941, to become an Assistant Chief of the Air Staff at the age of forty-three, charged with the special consideration of operational requirements and tactics.

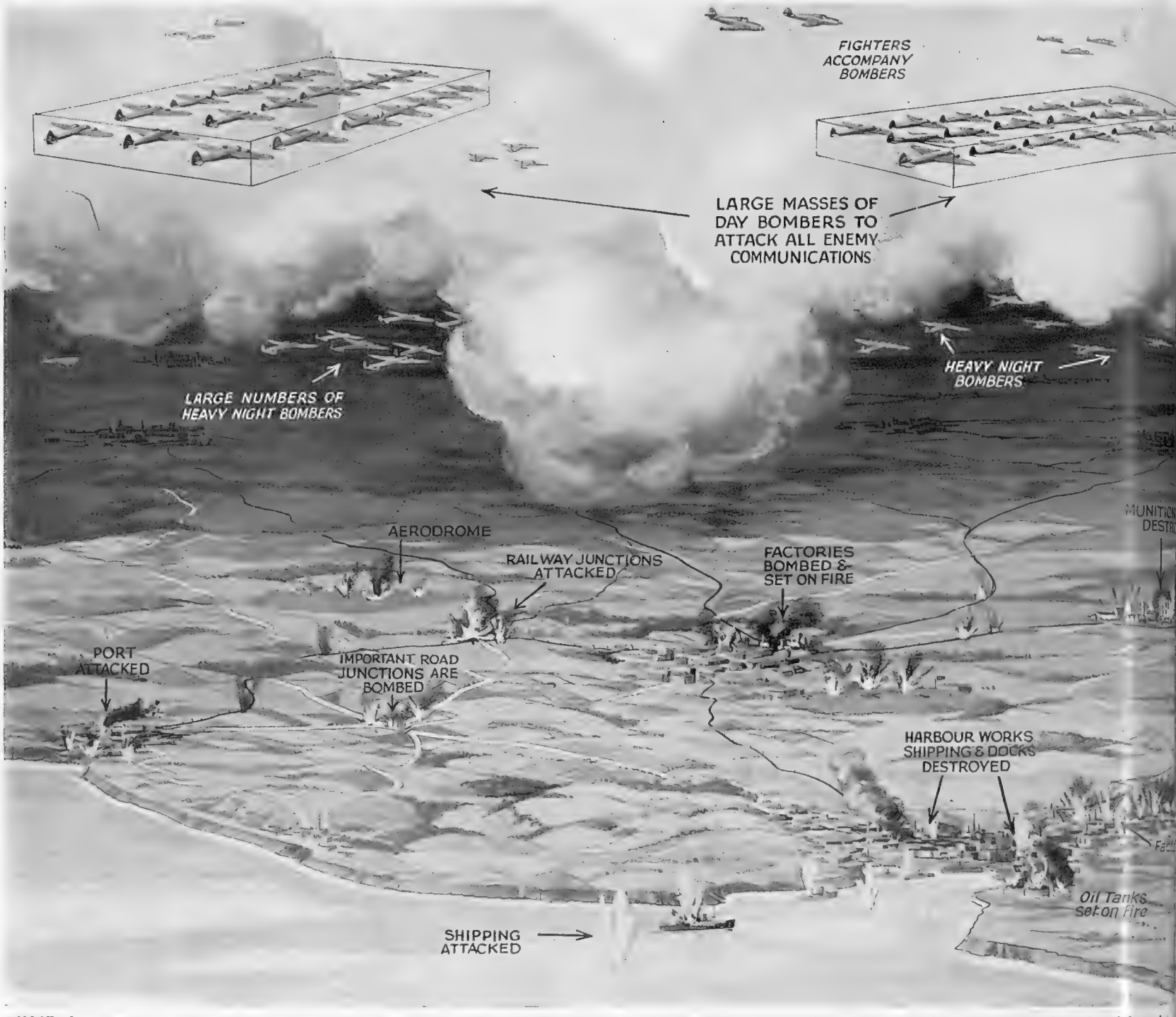
Decisions of to-day for the fighting requirements of to-morrow remain his province.

TIME MARCHES ON: The eight-gun fighter is now, in many cases, a four-cannon fighter—even deadlier than its forerunner! The guns are here seen sticking out in front of the wing. This picture was taken at a speed of 350 m.p.h.!



Drawing by Roland Davies

WHAT THE EIGHT-GUN FIGHTERS OF THE R.A.F. ACHIEVED: "A decisive result in combat in as short a period as possible": In working out the designs for the Hurricane and Spitfire, it was estimated that, in war, to obtain a decisive result a period of two seconds of fire was necessary, "as it was estimated that the average pilot would be able to hold his sights steadily on his target for no more than two seconds at a time. With eight guns a density of fire would be built up which should prove lethal." The truth of this was demonstrated in August and September last year, in the Battle of Britain!



PHASE I—"First must come the vital task of impeding the enemy's communications, disrupting his concentrations, and throwing his preparations for defence into a state of confusion"—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

To carry out these important tasks (as indicated in the article by Mr. Masefield below) assaults must be made by the attackers by both day and night. By day, large masses of day bombers would attack all enemy communications, road junctions and harbour works and shipping; the bombers being accompanied by fighters to beat off the defenders' aircraft. By night the work would go on against stationary targets, such as munition-centres, encampments, aerodromes and troop concentrations

PLANNING FOR A MAJOR ATTACK

If and When We Invade Enemy Territory, the Role of the R.A.F. will be a Very Important One

EVERY day on which the weather is favourable squadrons of the Fighter Command of the R.A.F. fly out on the offensive over France. A year ago the Battle of Britain was drawing to its close—the Fighter Command had triumphed in defence. Now the R.A.F. is building up a solid foundation of offensive tactics for still greater things to come.

Behind these daylight offensives, whether they be fighter sweeps or raids by strongly-escorted bombers, there lies a detailed strategy planned to combine with other operations in smashing the power of the *Luftwaffe*.

Last year the Fighter Command, though great in efficiency, was still small in numbers. Now its numbers have grown and are increasing steadily. Yet the efficiency is even higher than it was before and the technical superiority of its equipment is still greater. A greatly expanded force must have fighting experience to be competent in war. That is one factor which the American forces still lack. It is a factor which those in command of the R.A.F. determine shall not be left out of the training of our squadrons. Battle experience is the greatest attribute of all in war.

And so, by dint of constant offensive action during the past spring and summer, the Fighter Command, despite all its new blood, remains a real fighting force. A new generation of experienced flight commanders has been bred. The training is at the highest level of warlike efficiency.

And for what is all this planned? Who can look into the future? Yet, whether the Fighter Command has first to smash a new air invasion or can build up its offensive to reach far into enemy territory in co-operation with the other arms, the basis is laid.

Suppose that next spring the *Luftwaffe* should be capable of launching a new offensive in the West against Great Britain. We shall meet it, as we did in 1940, with the Fighter Command. The battle would be stern, for the enemy too has learned much from the operations last year and from the battles of Crete and of Russia. By day he will find himself opposed by squadrons not only of new Spitfires and vastly more deadly Hurricanes, but by the new and most formidable killer yet designed on any front, the Hawker Typhoon. By night there are the Beaufighters and the Havocs and a new technique to deal with the raiders.

In defence we can feel confident without complacency. But it is to the attack that we look forward with a real eagerness. The time will come when we shall be able to go forward on to the Continent to finish the job.

And that is one task for which the Fighter Command is being built up. Perhaps it may be far off as yet, for much remains to be done. Meanwhile, the Fighter Command is bent on establishing air superiority ever farther from its bases, so that the preparatory work of our bombers can go on with a sure aim unhindered.

There are three phases in the planning for the attack. First must come the vital task of impeding the enemy's communications, disrupting his concentrations and throwing his preparations for defence into a state of confusion. That task can be accomplished only by prolonged and intensive bombing by day and night, which, in its turn, is possible only with air superiority to defend the bombers. It is a job which the enemy set out to do over England in 1940—and failed. It is a job which we must accomplish successfully before we can hope to invade.

The next stage is the intensification of the local bombing of communications while landings are made under the cover of an impenetrable air umbrella. The enemy dive-bombers must be driven from the sky while the landings are made.

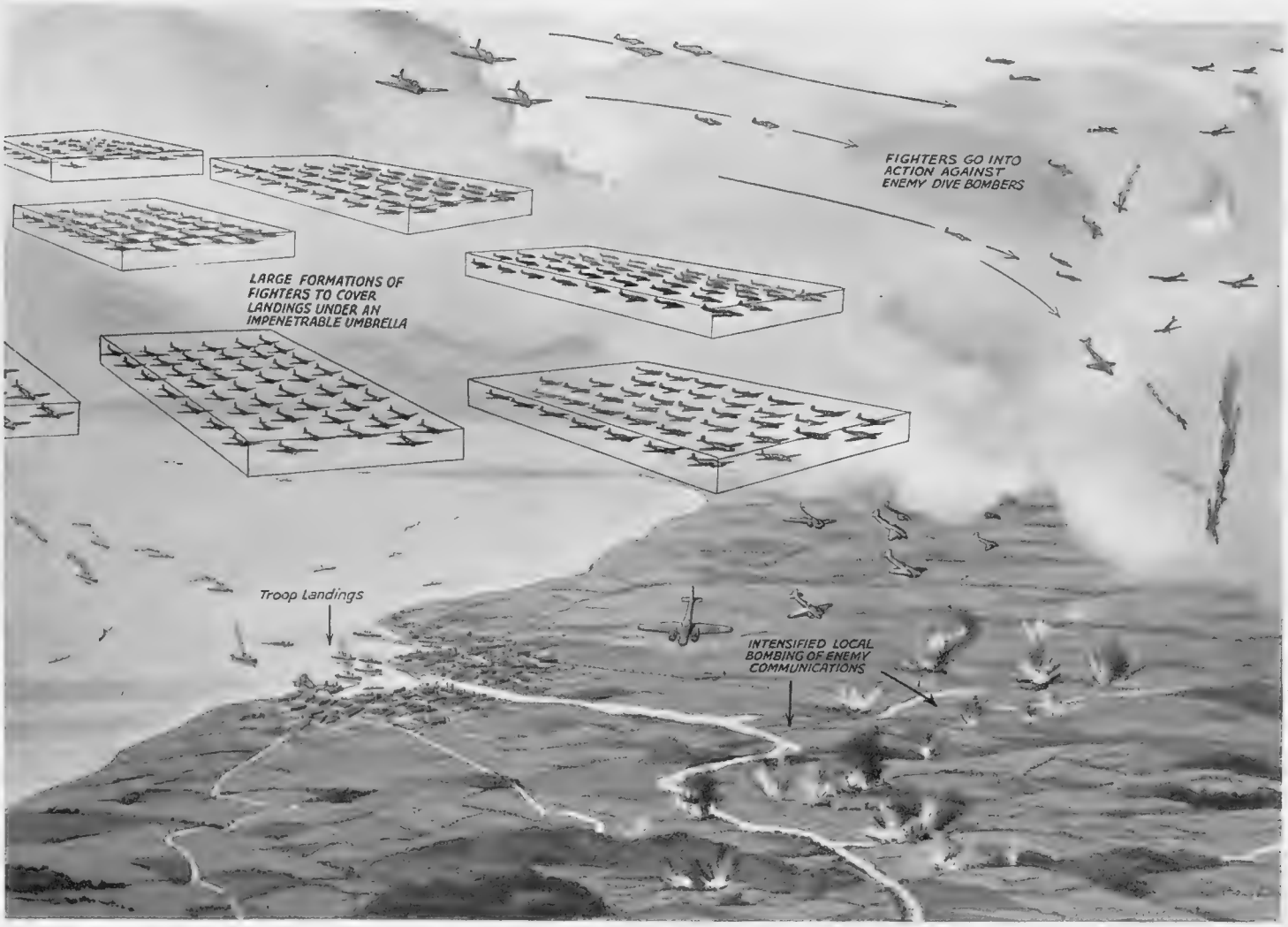
Finally comes the third phase—the advance. Then air support is more than ever necessary to protect the columns from air attack, to maintain the communications and to support the vanguard in its advance.

Fighter Command can establish air mastery over the main body—an advanced air component is needed to go forward at the head, again with its fighter support. There we may see the new American dive-bombers now beginning to come to the R.A.F.—the Vultee Vengeance and the Brewster Bermuda.

Technical superiority and tactical training will ensure the air mastery which we must have to win the war. Both these essentials are being built up in the Fighter Command to-day. Each fighter sweep, each day of action adds another drop to the growing pool of experience. The enemy, too, is well-blooded. Yet the Russian campaign has sapped much of his best material already. Germany is at the peak of its power; we are still building up our forces.

And so, with the one object in view, all our efforts must be redoubled to provide sufficient forces to give our technical superiority in equipment a chance to bring the fighting experience to such a peak that air mastery will be attained.

Peter Masefield

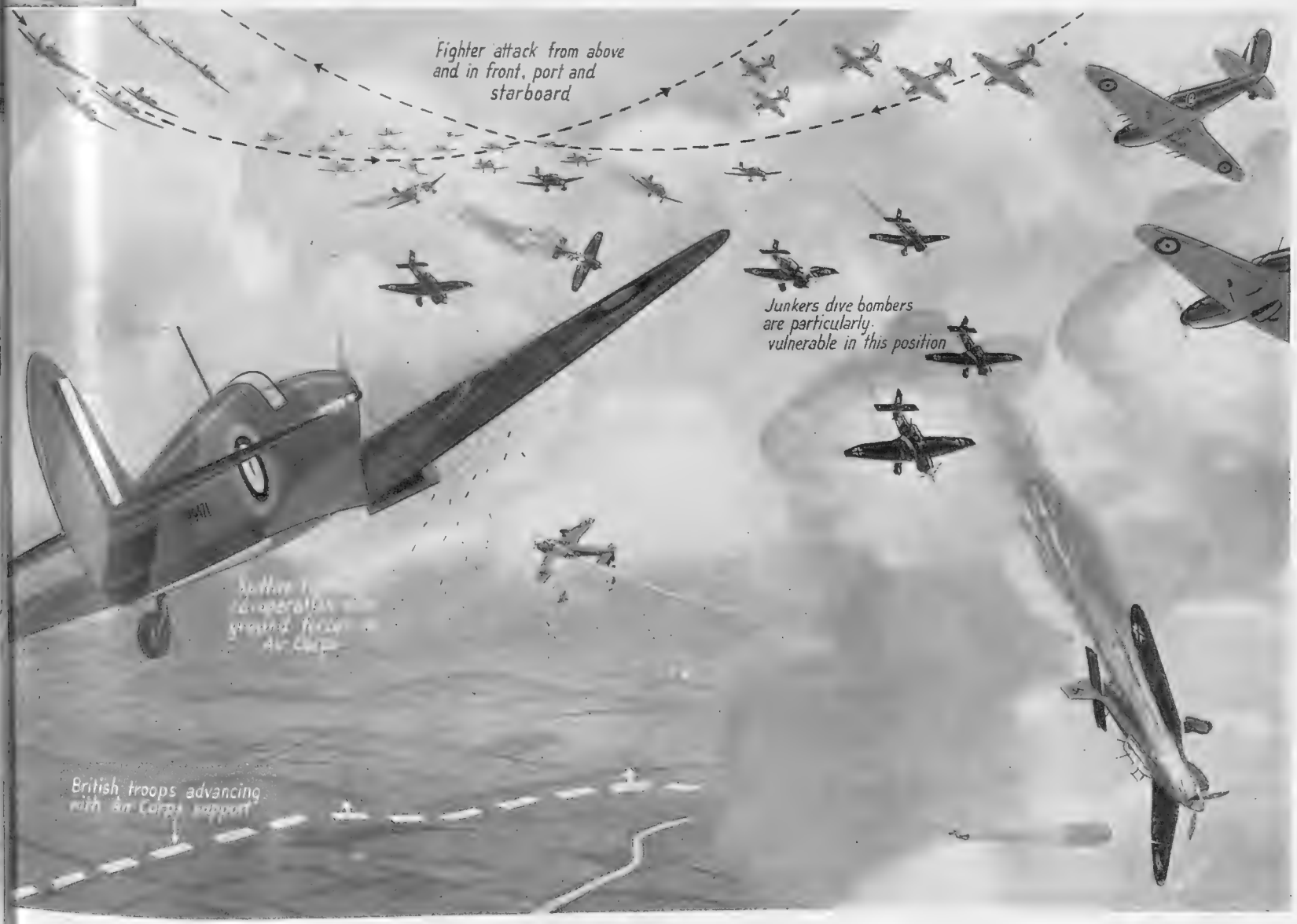


Above—**PHASE II—"The intensification of the local bombing of communications"**—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

After the prolonged bombing by day and night and the other necessary preparations, the landing of a big force in enemy territory must be made under cover of an "impenetrable air umbrella." This is important, because it is only by this means that enemy dive-bombers can be driven out of the sky. In his despatches, Lord Gort has, in fact, stressed the importance of the bomber and dive-bomber in military operations: "The enemy bombers, both high level and low flying, were a serious menace," he writes. "Their control by the German command was most efficient, capable of bringing the aircraft to their objective by wireless call at short notice. Attack by dive-bombers was a new experience. . . . Even those who had grown accustomed to heavy shell-fire . . . found that this placed a strain on morale"

Below—**PHASE III—The answer to the dive-bomber—Spitfires versus Junkers 87s**—*Drawing by L. Ashwell Wood*

Our employment of manœuvrable fighter types will no doubt be used in co-operation with our ground forces in the event of a large-scale attack on the enemy. The fighter units would probably be attached to the Army as Air Corps, to give the fullest support. Given sufficient strength, they would hold the mastery of the air, as the German dive-bombers are very vulnerable when opposed by efficient fighters, as witness the Battle of Britain last year, when the dive-bomber was completely eclipsed by our Hurricanes and Spitfires. The Army Command appear to hold this view! The Germans have only achieved success with their dive-bombers when the latter have been unopposed or when they have enjoyed an overwhelming superiority in numbers



GERMAN METHODS OF ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEFENCE—I: How they protect their road transport from attack by the employment of different types of A.-A. gun, working in conjunction with a light range-finder carried by a member of each gun crew (*see* notes below)—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

MOBILE DEFENCE AGAINST AIRCRAFT

As Practised by the Germans in Defence of Their Transport

THE paramount importance of aircraft in support of military operations is now generally understood, even by the layman. In his recently published Despatches, Lord Gort has further drawn attention to this subject by his references, not only to the enemy's aerial attacks, but also to the anti-aircraft defences which the Germans employed on the ground and which frequently hampered reconnaissance of their positions by our own aircraft.

The picture reproduced above shows how the enemy, in the course of their recent campaigns, have developed *mobile* anti-aircraft fire to a very great degree. A favourite target—and a most important one during operations in the field—is the moving column of transport, conveying troops or supplies from point to point in the battle zone. Aircraft which have attempted to bomb these columns have met with a concentrated fire from the ground which has been built up in the manner shown in the drawing above.

There are four standard German anti-aircraft gun types. These are the rifle-calibre gun; the 20-mm. gun; the 37-mm. gun; and the 88-mm. gun. In addition, there are weapons of even larger calibre than the last-mentioned, but it is not thought by the experts that these are in use in very large numbers.

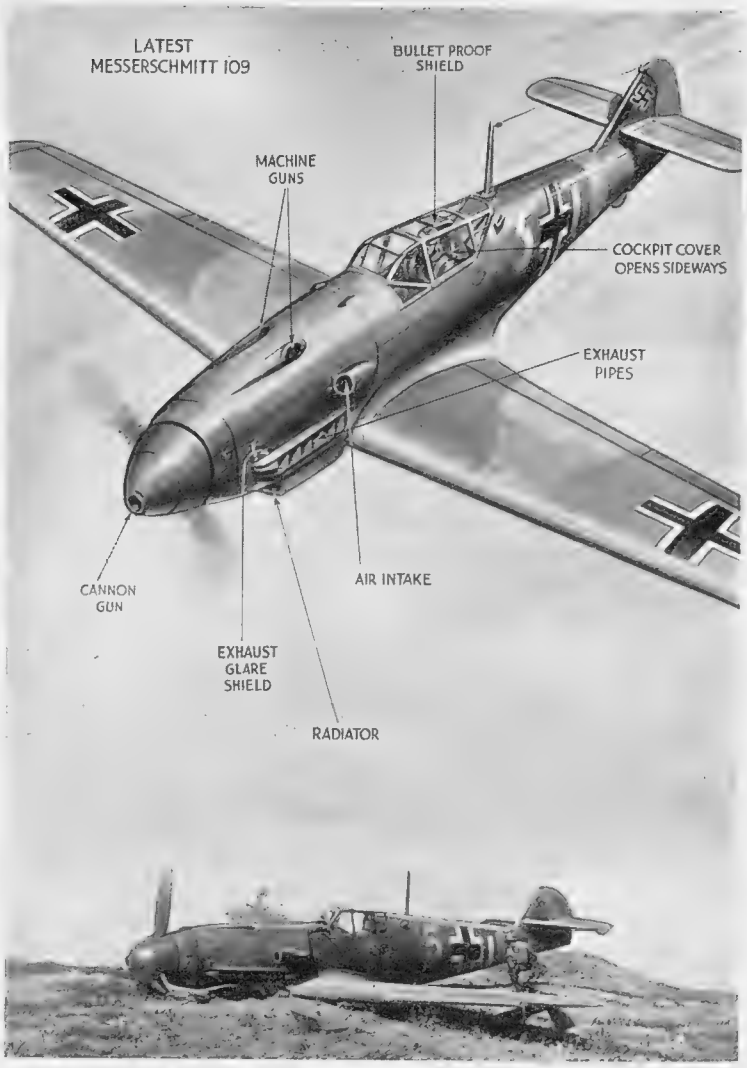
In the upper drawing the 20-mm. gun and the 37-mm. gun are illustrated, the former on the right, and the latter on the left. Both these types are clip-fed. Working with each gun is a light range-finder, carried by a member of the gun team; this quickly gives the gunner the data he requires and thus eliminates indiscriminate firing.

Working with these mobile guns, and occupying its own place in the transport column is the type illustrated in the drawing on the left. This takes the form of twin machine-guns, belt-fed and of rifle calibre, mounted on a motor-lorry for use against low-flying aircraft intent on "strafing" the column.

Needless to say, the Germans have not a monopoly of anti-aircraft devices: in fact, this is an arm in which we are now particularly strong. During the past few months, the British defences have been strengthened in a most remarkable manner, and it is certain that our own guns and "other devices" are every bit as good as the enemy's—if not better! With regard to the operations in France, covered in his recently published Despatches, Lord Gort makes the following statement concerning A.-A. defences: "Ground anti-aircraft defence, both gun and light automatic, improved in accuracy as time went on, and it accounted for the destruction of over 500 aircraft in addition to its effect in breaking up formations of enemy aircraft. But being purely defensive, it can never prove the complete antidote to enemy bombers and reconnaissance aircraft, even when available in sufficient strength. A commander must have at his call sufficient fighters to intercept and attack the enemy. The commander must, likewise, dispose of a sufficient bomber force to be able to engage enemy targets of vital tactical importance. Such targets were the enemy mechanised columns at Maastricht, Sedan and Boulogne . . ."

On left—**GERMAN METHODS OF ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEFENCE—II: Defending road convoys from attack whilst on the move**—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

"ALL OUR AIRCRAFT RETURNED SAFELY": An R.A.F. pilot's own interpretation of this well-known phrase: The picture reproduced here has been exhibited at the National Gallery: it is the work of Flight-Lieut. J. A. Russell, D.F.C. The painting depicts the return home of a big bomber through a storm over the Alps. Ice had formed on the wings; flame and smoke are coming from the irregular firing of the port engine, and at the same time the starboard engine is overheating through loss of cooling mixture. In addition, the aircraft had been unable to release its load of bombs!

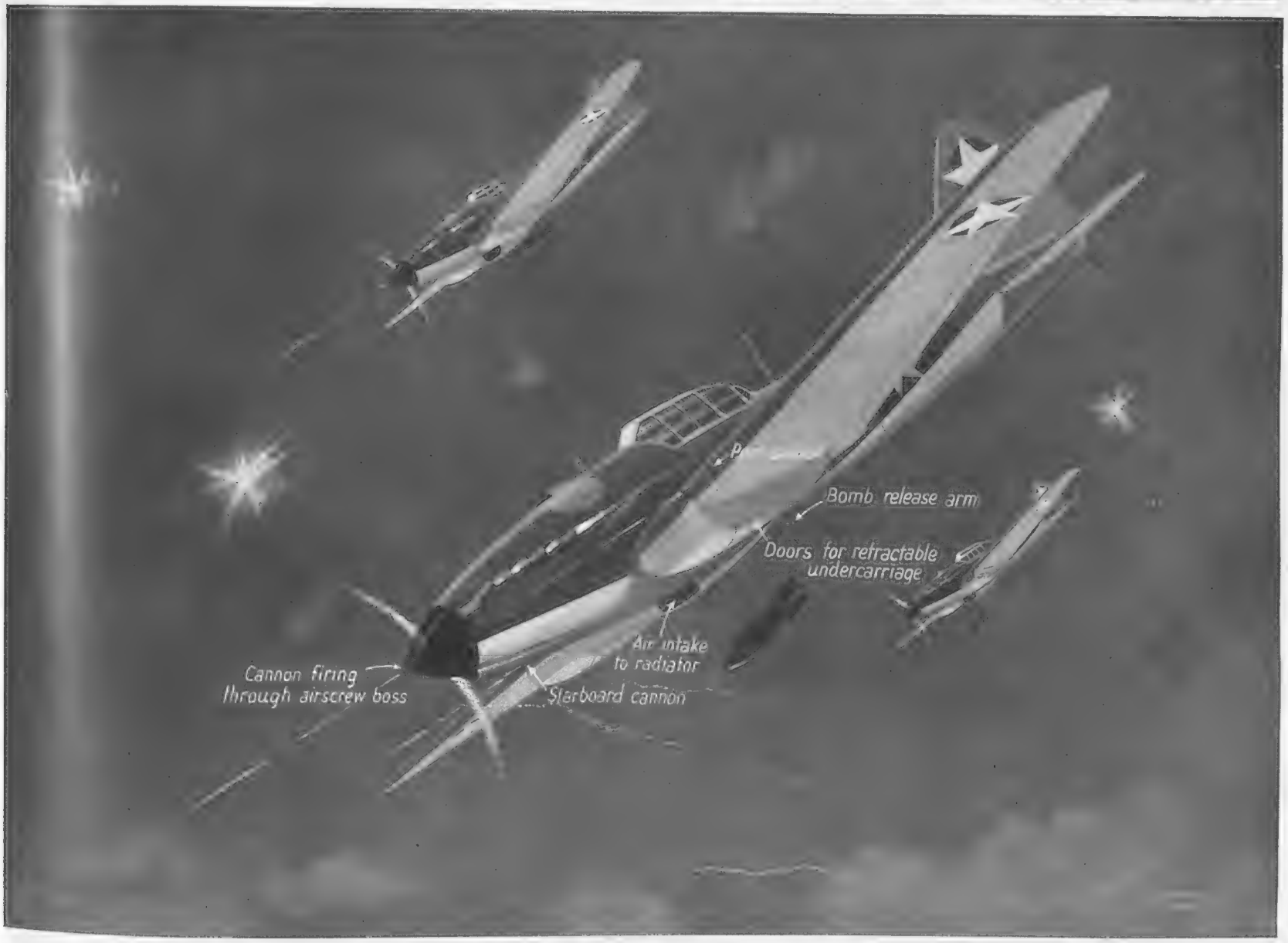


THE NEW RUSSIAN DIVE-BOMBER

And a Reconstruction of the Latest German Messerschmitt

***On right*—BEFORE AND AFTER A CRASH ON THE RUSSIAN FRONT**—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

The photograph on which Mr. Davies's drawing has been based comes from the Russian front: it shows one of the latest Messerschmitts shot down by our Allies. Above, is a reconstruction of the same aircraft before its downfall, showing the principal features of its design. There are now many types of Messerschmitt, most of them designated by different numerals and letters to indicate detail improvements, but, despite all their additions and changes and letters and numbers, they are still being shot down by the new Russian M.I.G.3 (whose existence was revealed recently by Lord Beaverbrook) and by the British Hurricane and Spitfire!



THE NEW SOVIET DIVE-BOMBER, THE STORMOVIK, described recently by Lord Beaverbrook—*A reconstruction by L. Ashwell Wood*

During his broadcast speech on October 12 Lord Beaverbrook described two new types of Russian aircraft—the M.I.G.3 fighter, and the Stormovik dive-bomber. Details of the first-named are not yet available for an authoritative drawing to be made by our artist; but in the case of the Stormovik, Mr. Ashwell Wood has been able to indicate its appearance from photographic material now in our possession. This aircraft is a mid-wing cantilever monoplane of all-metal construction, with an appearance which is certainly striking. The armament includes three cannon and machine-guns, and it has proved very successful against the Nazis on the Russian front. The bomb-load is at present unknown

GORT AND IRON

be Noted in the Record of

CHIEF OF THE IMPERIAL GENERAL STAFF IN 1939 AND 1940

Field-Marshal Sir Edmund Ironside was "Inspector-General of Overseas Forces" in 1939 before he took over the very responsible post of C.I.G.S. at the War Office. In the early days of the war his work-room was also his bedroom: for the first ten weeks, in fact, he did not return to his home once. When General Sir John Dill was appointed Chief of the Imperial General Staff, General Ironside became Commander-in-Chief of the Home Forces: this latter post was later taken over by Sir Alan Brooke. Sir Edmund Ironside is now sixty-one years of age and was created a Field-Marshal last year

PUBLICATION of the Gort Despatch, with its tale of record *débâcle*, sent me to some pages given me by General Ironside at Gibraltar before the war. They were a friendly bestowal intended to help a harassed scrivener, and were made by one who, like every Governor of the Rock in peacetime, recognised himself and his views to be in elegant retirement. The General was satisfied I would not use them to the detriment of military security, and security is no more involved in them now than it is in Lord Gort's published Despatches.

April 1939. Government House. The same office where now sits Lord Gort. Sir Edmund hopes for that vast Peace Front which would include Russia. Will Chamberlain bring it off? Is he a realist? Of course, in reality, it would be a War Front. War is certain—October at latest. The best way to tackle Germany this time is to stretch her out. "She 'll die eventually from an over-consumption of foreign bodies—it happened once before." Also, the drawing out of Germany will provide a wide circumference on which to bite, and gradually weaken her. Our main offensive, though, should not be from France but from the Mediterranean (I am already well into the document).

General Ironside strongly disliked the idea of a British Army in France in this war. "More and more signs appear on the military horizon, of a return to the policy of sending an Expeditionary Force to France in the event of war. This is a disturbing thought. Ever since the Great War, our statesmen have hated the idea of an enormous army swallowing up the manhood of the nation as it did in 1914-18. And with reason, for the landing of even a token army in France must lead to an ever-growing demand by our Allies for an increase in our land forces. It will mean the same subservience of our national strategy to that of our Allies. And yet, our statesmen appear to be contemplating this very thing."

In view of certain lacunæ in the Gort Despatch, it should in all fairness be recorded that the Field-Marshal had nothing whatever to do with the preparation of the Army or its fighting equipment prior to the B.E.F.'s sailing for France. With the exception of a tenure of the Eastern Command, he was out of this country during the '30's. What use the new C.I.G.S. made of the eight months which then preceded the onslaught, as regards getting a move on over arms and equipment, I know not; but that 's all the time he had, and it seems still to be a pretty tough proposition to get adequate fighting equipment out of this country.

Alternately, were men and munitions unduly kept in England or sent to other theatres, when they should have gone to France? The B.E.F. was scheduled to be ten Divisions by May; it was more than nine. As for retaining armaments in Britain, when the troops returned from Dunkirk, how much was there to give them? Nor was anything substantial diverted at this early stage to Wavell, although his was the theatre which in General Ironside's view held the way to victory:

"Is it not time that France and ourselves made up our minds to use our geographical positions to the best advantage . . .? Let us arrange for the defence of our National Bases, the United Kingdom and France, and let us use our remaining forces to attack the enemy—should he start a war against us—at his weakest point. . . .

"Can we win the next war, by a defensive pure and simple? No, certainly not. Can we consider France the best position from which to carry out an offensive against our enemies? Again, no, certainly not. Can we exert that economic stranglehold upon our enemies, which we seek, if all our man-power is eaten up in France? Can we exert it by a simple offensive? No, of course we cannot. Here in the Mediterranean is the best place for our Imperial Strategy and for our combined strategy with France. . . . Have we calculated what we want here, not only to secure it as a base, but for an offensive later?

"And France, with her large garrison and reservoir of man-power in North Africa? Need she pour once more all her men into the home country? Has she made any plans alone or with us, or are her eyes to be fixed on Marseilles? The land communications of North Africa are excellent and admit of the movement of large forces. Are we both going to stand on the defensive in the Mediterranean, while portions of our Empires are nibbled off, or perhaps torn off easily? All because we have allowed ourselves to be paralysed at our home centres.

ATTENDING A CABINET MEETING AT NO. 10, DOWNING STREET: This picture was taken in the first week of the war. General Ironside was then C.I.G.S. and in this capacity attended Cabinet meetings with the other Chiefs of Staff—Sir Cyril Newall and Sir Dudley Pound

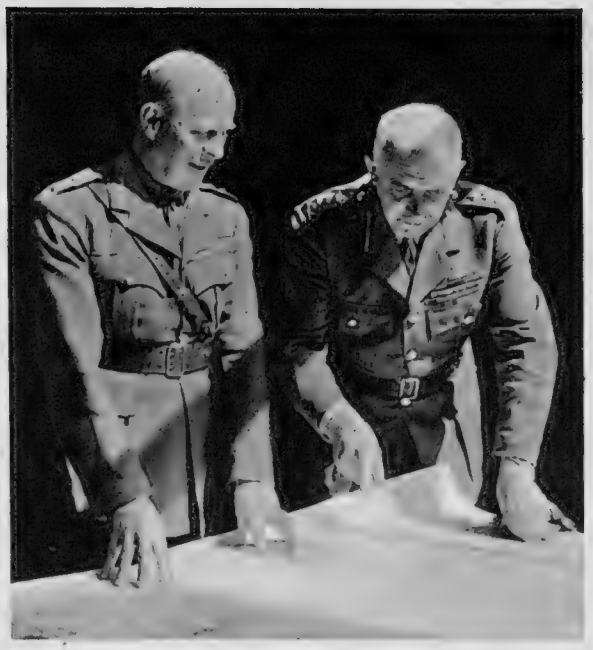
FROM 1938 TO 1939, GENERAL IRONSIDE WAS GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AT GIBRALTAR: After leaving the Eastern Command and before becoming Inspector-General of Overseas Forces, General Ironside was Civil and Military Governor of Gibraltar. This picture commemorates a little-known piece of pomp and pageantry in this connection. No matter where the Governor may be dining on the Rock, the Guard come to him, accompanied by a drummer, and hand him the Keys after the Fortress has been locked up. These keys, each engraved with the name of the gate to which it belongs, then lie on a cushion beside the Governor's plate until dinner is over. Here General Ironside is seen receiving the Keys from their custodian, whilst the drummer still taps away!

SIDE: A New Page to British Military History

By FERDINAND TUOHY

" Here is our correct field of offence if we will only take it. In the Mediterranean. Let us gather our Imperial resources in the Middle East and let the French act with us as another arm of a pair of pincers. We must make sure of the Middle East—Iraq, Palestine, Egypt. We must first make it a secure rallying point for our Indian Army, British and Indian, for our Australian and South African Allies, or a starting-point for their succour if need be. We must have the necessary troops on hand, for reinforcing in a crisis in these days of submarines and long-range aircraft is an uncertain business. It means the concentration of men and material. It is a large area and has good communications by sea and land.

" But let there be no misunderstanding as to the difficulties. An Offensive requires more preparation than a Defensive, even if directed by one nation. . . . Can we not aim at such a campaign as that of Allenby in Palestine, with a determination to push it through from the Government behind ? "



TAKEN IN SEPTEMBER 1939 : General Lord Gort, V.C., Commander-in-Chief of the British Field Forces, with General Sir Edmund Ironside, Chief of the Imperial General Staff

ANOTHER MEMORABLE PICTURE : General Gort with the French Generalissimo Gamelin—a picture taken in happier days, before the French General's fall and subsequent incarceration and trial

When a military leader displays crevasses, he soon becomes a target even should caste and privilege preserve him over a period. His acts and inadequacy have stuck out. But when a political leader displays flaw after flaw year after year, he becomes merged in, and bolstered up by, the most powerful system in the land. Such has been the experience of nearly twenty years. There 's no good beating about the bush when you 're down over the Gort Despatch. It 's all part of the one story. The real culprit is a political system which skips over the best value in the country and pushes to the top men like B. and C. and droves of their like still with us.

It is clear that had General Ironside and not Lord Gort been made C.I.G.S. in 1938, the policy urged on the Government would have been for a larger pre-war despatch of troops to the Middle East and for a continued flow thither after war came. This would have been at the expense of the B.E.F., but, as events were to rule, would maybe a couple of divisions less in France have made so much difference ? The French would have raised the deuce ? General Ironside wanted an equally full, though radically different, co-operation with the French to that so disastrously followed. As unpredictables were to dictate, his method might have led to the retention of French North Africa, with consequent little or no Vichy.

The Ironside plumping for the Mediterranean in fullest co-operation with France failed to foresee the French collapse. But who did foresee this, save no doubt French Quislings and possibly Hitler himself ? Even without France, and with small forces until recently, our Mediterranean story has shone brightly. What might not have sprung from strong Franco-British fighting unity there in the early stages ? Directly we were at war with Germany, Ironside counted on the Allies being sufficiently intelligent to go for Germany's ally, not to wait on Mussolini's good pleasure.

This document is permeated with the strategy of stonewalling in *France*, given that a B.E.F. had to go there. The Ironside of early 1939 would without any doubt have been for the B.E.F. waiting to receive the shock in its dug-in positions round Lille. Whether as C.I.G.S. he later retained the same view, I don't know. Operations were under Gamelin, who may have imposed himself or persuaded. It is hard, moreover, to reconcile Lord Ironside and the Norway fiasco, and his general over-confidence at this period.

There remains the question of Lord Gort having been " interfered with by London soldiers and politicians." The General Ironside I saw at the War Office while the B.E.F. was landing, was as emphatic as ever that Lord Gort had been freakishly advanced beyond his Command experience and proofs. But Lord Gort was Gamelin's pigeon—and, in effect, that soldier has related how he bore himself as the equivalent of a French Army Commander. I believe it is so that Britain's two highest soldiers met only once in France prior to the *débâcle :* in January, when Gamelin decorated each.

On May 20 Lord Gort's Chief of Staff telephoned the War Office to discuss matters. The Cabinet met, and next day General Ironside was sent to G.H.Q., with a plan for the B.E.F. to fight its way back to the Somme ; a plan Lord Gort was able to negative as having come too late. But the point is that Mr. Churchill presided over that Cabinet, so that if there was any interference with Lord Gort, the Prime Minister sanctioned it.

Actually, one can visualise what happened only too well. Suddenly confronted by the dreadful extent of the calamity, the Churchill Cabinet and its advisers had one thought only—to liberate the B.E.F. from the fantastic French High Command and to try and guide it to momentary safety behind the Somme. And it was not such a bad idea, either. For you must bear in mind that if people here call the Dunkirk rescue " a miracle," to others it appeared, or was represented as, a helter-skelter exodus, if not a *sauve qui peut.*

THE THREE SERVICE CHIEFS AT THE OPENING OF WAR : On the left is Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Cyril Newall. He became Chief of Air Staff in 1937, and held that post till 1940, when he was appointed Governor-General of New Zealand. He was succeeded by Sir Charles Portal. On the right is Field-Marshal Ironside, C.I.G.S. from 1939 to 1940 : he was succeeded by Sir John Dill. In the centre is Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound, First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff. He began the war in this capacity and is the only one of the three still remaining

THE BRITISH C.-IN-C. OF THE B.E.F. IN FRANCE : A picture taken at Lord Gort's Headquarters in Arras before the invasion of the Low Countries by the Germans

REFUELLING A BRITISH NAVAL VESSEL ENGAGED ON A TROPIC PATROL: A cruiser of the Leander class in a sheltered anchorage beneath the waving palms of a tropical stores are being transferred from a supply ship anchored near by—*Drawing by Montague Dawson*

MANY of the vessels of the Royal Navy are operating in far-off parts of the world, where the problems of supply and refuelling are considerable. The experience gained during the last war in this connection has proved valuable during the present war. Then, one of the places used by our naval vessels was the Abrolhos Rocks, off the coast of Brazil: this was comfortably outside territorial waters, and was a most convenient anchorage. To-day, our patrols are ranging far and wide, in tropic waters as well as in the cold and icy North Atlantic.

The scene depicted by Mr. Dawson above has been located at a tropic island, with sunny skies, waving palm-trees and deep blue water. The tanker has gone alongside the cruiser and made fast in such a way that her pump-room (just forward of the bridge) comes alongside the cruiser's funnels, where the latter's boiler-rooms are: she can thus pump straight across.

If there were a hurry, the storeship seen away on the right would lie on the other side of the cruiser and transfer her stores across the deck. It is undesirable to "sandwich" the cruiser in this fashion, however, unless the need is really urgent. The storeship, therefore, is laying off and transferring the stores by boat. For this purpose it is usual to use the cruiser's 14-oar ship's barges or 12-oar cutters, as local barges for the purpose do not exist! Both these types are now propelled by a small Diesel, which does not show above the rail. Officers can move from one vessel to the other in the motor picket-boats and launches of the new glassed-in type.

Both the tanker and the storeship—the latter an ordinary tramp—wear the Blue Ensign. It is usual for them to be painted battleship-grey; but the storeship also has a black funnel-top.

***On left*—LIFE IN A CRUISER AT SEA CAN SOMETIMES BE VERY PEACEFUL!**
Ratings and soldiers are here seen sun-bathing on deck, whilst those on watch on the bridge keep a careful look-out

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TRAINING THE DESTROYER MEN

INSIDE THE GUNNERY SPOTTING-ROOM WHEN A TORPEDO "ATTACK" IS IN PROGRESS: The "control officers" in the foreground are observing alterations of course

In the British Home Fleet, the Destroyer Depot Ship (see also p. 151 of this issue) serves as a naval schoolroom, where the future destroyer men are trained in gunnery, torpedo-firing, anti-submarine work, seamanship and signalling. Models of ships are used, and the lighting is arranged so as to convey the effects of searchlights, star shells and gun-flashes. By this means the men learn a surprising amount concerning the manner of handling and fighting the ships on which they will soon be serving. The pictures reproduced here show scenes taken aboard this modern school-ship

AN ATTACK BEING CARRIED OUT AT NIGHT: The "gunnery officer" in the foreground watches from the dummy bridge. The little electric lights above the "enemy ships" represent star shells fired by the destroyer to light them up

IE "CONTROL OFFICER" AT THE TORPEDO SIGHT on the dummy bridge in the Gunnery Spotting-room: The bulbs in front of him flash into his face to give the effect of gun flashes at night

THE "ENEMY" AS SEEN THROUGH THE "CONTROL OFFICER'S" GLASSES: The little lights above represent star shells from the destroyers, and the lighting represents searchlights from other ships

THROUGH THEIR GLASSES FROM LITTLE WINDOWS AT THE BACK OF THE DARKENED ROOM, "control officers" observe how the shells are falling on the enemy vessels

IN THE DUMMY TRANSMITTING STATION: This is the vital little room in a warship where orders are received from the "control officer" and mathematical problems are automatically worked out concerning range, speed, etc., and the results transmitted

A CRISIS IN THE OFFICERS' MESS?

The War has Created a Serious Situation Amongst the Wine Dealers; and the Repercussions of This are Here Discussed in an Authoritative Article

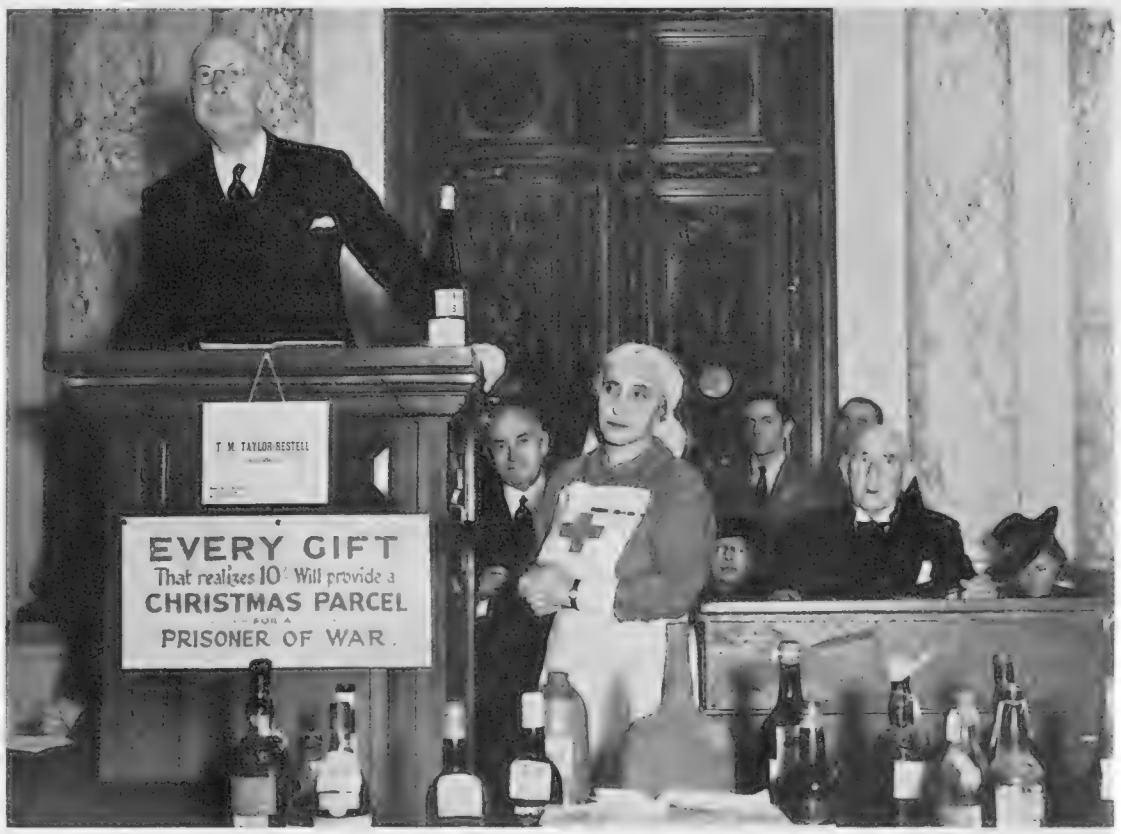
By CHARLES GRAVES

NEVER in the history of this country has so little liquor been available to so many. In the last war our Expeditionary Force on the Continent was able to "live on the land" as far as wines and brandy and even beer were concerned. In this war whisky has been rationed by 50 per cent. We have thousands of Canadian and other troops, including the Free French, Free Polish, and so on, all thirsty, most of them somewhat bored. We have also 12,000 evacuees from Gibraltar, and refugee royalties, together with refugee Governments. The population of this country has increased out of all proportion as a result of Hitler. Take the American Embassy, for example. Its staff is now 2,000 strong, of whom 800 are in the Navy Department alone. In peacetime the Embassy gives employment to about 60 or 70 people.

Since the beginning of the year no wine shipments have been allowed to enter this country, wine not being considered an essential commodity. Millions of bottles of wine and spirits have been destroyed in the "blitz." Thousands of young men who have taken commissions have also taken a fancy to sherry and port. The King's health is drunk nightly all over the country. But looming up quite clearly is the fact that within six months the officers' messes will be unable to obtain any more sherry.

The managing director of a Sackville Street firm of wine merchants which supplies more than half of his Majesty's ships was telling me that the situation is genuinely serious. At present the system is to put on board £8 worth of liquor per officer—on sale or return. Thus there would be £560 worth of liquor on a cruiser, which would last about ten weeks. In the last war this firm lost £14,000 worth of stock at the Battle of Jutland. In this war they have been able to insure against war risks at sea.

Naval officers will be sorry to hear that there is a grave shortage of their favourite gin, although they will still be able to get gin of other brands. The whisky situation is still all right; but unless the present policy about importing sherry is reversed, the Navy will have none in six months' time. The port situation is "fairly all right." Beer will have to be drunk in moderation, especially as two of the Navy's favourite brewers have found it necessary to give up their contract for supplying his Majesty's ships.



AUCTIONING WINE AS AN AID TO THE RED CROSS: Recently London has witnessed a number of auction sales of fine wines and liqueurs; and some good sums of money have gone to the Red Cross funds in consequence. This picture was taken a few days ago in London, at Christie's sale-rooms: it shows Lord Iliffe, chairman of the Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross and St. John Appeal, auctioning some of the Duke's gift of wines during the Red Cross Wine Sale

A PICTURE FROM PRE-WAR FRANCE, before the overrunning of the Champagne District

Pommery and Greno was, before the war, one of the most celebrated champagne firms in France. The Champagne district has now been gutted by the Germans: what they could not drink after the fall of France, they have wasted! This picture was taken during the celebrations staged by Pommery's to mark the firm's one-hundredth anniversary. Representatives from many countries were present when this picture was taken: it shows experts bottling the precious wine in its first stages

According to the managing director of this firm, he is no philanthropist, but feels that it would be bad luck on the Navy if he sold his stock at the prices which obtain elsewhere.

"I doubt very much whether I am making any goodwill," he said, "but I am actually selling to the Navy at 50 per cent. of the price at which I am buying. Mind you, E.P.T. would take away any profits in any event."

E.P.T. is an added safeguard for officers and civilians who deal with their own wine merchants. The latter could sell their entire stocks at a day's notice for figures twice or three times the size of what they paid for them. But this would do them no good financially. It would also mean that they would lose their goodwill, which has been built up in many cases for generations. What wine merchants are doing is to keep an eye on their growing overheads (war risk insurance being an important factor) and then dole out as little as they can so as to make the debit and credit side approximate as economically as possible.

If you have any doubt that wine merchants could not sell their stocks at many times the original price which they paid for them, you need only look at the figures paid at the two-days' sale of wines at certain auction rooms in London recently. Believe it or not, sherry fetched 200s. a dozen, French Vermouth 370s. (!), a 1928 liqueur brandy 555s. a dozen, Pimms 250s. a dozen, and Wolfs-Schmidt's Kümmel no less than 1,000s.—in other words, well over £4 a bottle for stuff that one could buy from a wine merchant for 16s. only a few weeks ago.

There is no doubt that a black market in wines and spirits has been in full swing for some time. There are people going round the country buying odd bottles of Kümmel for a sovereign apiece and then, having matched them up, like pearls, to a dozen, sell them at 300 per cent. profit. Whisky is being offered in London at 22s. 6d. a bottle, although the normal price is 17s. 6d. I have heard of cases where half-a-dozen furriers have banded together and bought a hogshead of brandy to hold it against rising prices.

When wine merchants inform the Government that their stocks of sherry are perilously low, they are met with the bland retort that there is any amount of sherry in bond. This is perfectly true but a great deal of it has fallen into the hands of people who are not regular wine merchants. Wine merchants dare not press the matter too far, for fear that there will be Government-controlled prices; which would mean that, as in the case of onions and other edibles previously controlled, stocks would disappear with magic rapidity.

In the last war there was no rationing of liquor because the Government insisted on all transactions being done on a cash basis. This automatically reduced consumption.

At the moment there is a movement among certain restaurants to persuade the whole restaurant and hotel trade to ration their clients on a basis of not more than one bottle of wine for two persons; not more than one glass of liqueur per head; and not more than a double whisky ditto. It is quite true that this could be easily evaded by people going from one restaurant to the next, but it might be a step in the right direction. At the present minute the prices of champagne, for example, are reaching ridiculous heights. One of the best-known restaurants is charging 57s. for a bottle of Bollinger, and recently the manager pointed out with glee and awe the fact that a party of four people had just finished off four bottles between them. That really ought not to be allowed, especially as reports from Occupied France show that the Germans have taken away vast quantities of champagne, have drunk a great deal more, and are even said to have confiscated the mother wines which are utterly essential for the future of the French wine industry.

In conclusion, it is the Canadians, the newly-formed Army battalions, and the newest R.A.F. squadrons who are most unlucky. Practically no wine merchant can afford to take on new customers, and so it is left to the unfortunate officers to try and scrounge bottles from anywhere they can get them. One would have thought that the Government would remember that while an Army marches on its stomach, it also needs something pleasant to pour down its throat . . .

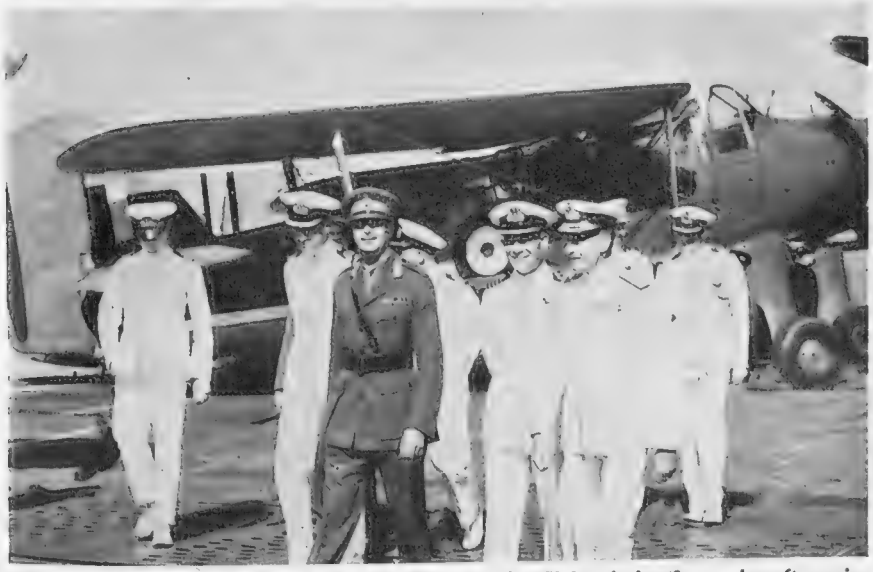
THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER AT GIBRALTAR

AT LORD GORT'S LUNCHEON PARTY IN THE DUKE'S HONOUR: From left to right are General Barron-y-Ortez, Spanish Governor of Algeciras, the Marquesa de Povar, the Duke of Gloucester, and Señora Barron-y-Ortez, taking a stroll after lunch in the garden of Government House, Gibraltar

LORD GORT, GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF GIBRALTAR, with General Barron-y-Ortez and other members of the luncheon party

THE DUKE ON THE HIGHEST POINT OF THE ROCK: This A.-A. defence post is manned by the Gibraltar Defence Force. It is situated at the very highest point—1,369 ft. above sea-level. Note that Spain can be seen in the background

EMERGING FROM A GREAT DEFENSIVE POINT which has been built into the vertical side of the Rock and called "Middle Galleries": With the Duke is the Chief Engineer, Colonel Fordham



WITH VICE-ADMIRAL SIR JAMES SOMERVILLE on the flight deck of an aircraft-carrier at Gibraltar during the Duke's visit to the Western Mediterranean Fleet

VIEWING THE BRITISH FLEET ANCHORED BELOW: The Duke of Gloucester at the observation post at the top of the Rock of Gibraltar

It was recently announced that the Duke of Gloucester has just concluded a visit to the Rock of Gibraltar, where he visited General Lord Gort, Governor and Commander-in-Chief, and carried out a tour of inspection of the military and naval defences. During his stay at Gibraltar he was the Guest of Honour at a luncheon which was also attended by the Spanish Governor of Algeciras

OTHER THINGS THAN WAR...

The New Culture; Notes on Sidesplitters and Dinner-bells and Old School Ties

PRIESTLEY'S NEW CULTURE.—I have a deep sympathy with nearly all which Mr. Priestley has said and written during the present war. I find myself always in warm agreement with his democratic principles. It is only when I have time to reflect that I begin to question his practical conclusions. Some time ago he wrote an article in the *Times Literary Supplement* called "The Cultural Problem," in which he set forth the changing aspects of our social and cultural life—with special reference to our literature—as a result of a closer co-operation between Britain and America; and as a result of London or England ceasing to be the cultural and social hub of the Empire, the English-speaking world and civilisation. That briefly (but, I think, fairly stated) was the new situation which he visualised. Its effect on our literature in his view will be (already is) the enlarging of the "appeal" to a wider circle than a privileged or leisured class, to which hitherto the novel in particular has usually been confined.

Mr. Priestley gives proof of his contention by citing the failure of the "Oxford manner" type of broadcaster in our Empire and American broadcasts. Ideally, it should be so; practically, will it be so after this war? Will *our* democracy and the American and Empire's "true" democracies ensure that, if an English writer wishes to gain a public, he must so enlarge his appeal and cease to "play to the stalls"? The age of privilege has been an unconscionable time a-dying since 1832, and Mr. Priestley admits that the reason *why* was that it had all too many admirers and "apers" among the great majority outside the charmed circle. But is class-consciousness really a dead letter yet in England, in Boston (Mass.), in Australia or Canada?

Ask of the Heralds' College. Find out who are the buyers of the "Society" and gossip journals? They are certainly not "the old nobility." Certainly, in the Victorian and Edwardian eras a majority of novelists appeared to appeal to the privileged class, but it is notorious that those novelists who were in that class—Jane Austen, Thackeray, Miss Eden, Hichens, Hope, Lady Emily Ponsonby, Mrs. Gore, Lady Augusta Noel, and such-like, big and small literary fry—were imitated by a much greater number of novelists who were not in it, and made a score of bungles and *gaffes* in attempting to portray a social existence of which they knew only by hearsay: e.g., Mrs. Henry Wood and Miss Braddon, with their inevitable baronets.

Here are some Aunt Sallies which Mr. Priestley puts up for coconut throws: "We smile at the old-fashioned genteel novel in which nobody did any work . . . and cadging from rich relatives was regarded as more honourable than taking pay for decent service."

Like hell we do! Was Trollope ever more popular than now? Were his novels ever more difficult to secure from the libraries?

"It is the 'safe' writer (one who does not introduce embarrassing social and political questions) who receives public recognition and honours."

The author of *Tess* gained the O.M. (Carlyle, for that matter, refused a K.C.B.) Barrie (whose books, at least, were not rooted in privilege) got honours fit for a Premier. I am quite sure that the modern author who gets recognition earns it, not because his books are "safe" politically, but because he keeps himself shrewdly in the public eye.

I guarantee that, if the paper and the facilities were available to publishers, the output of the type of novel popular in the 1930's would to-day be as great as then.

Sidesplitting.—In a discourse on books beside the fire the other evening, some elderly folk discussed the literary humorist, and tried to recall the books which had "made them laugh till it hurt." We were careful to restrict the field of inquiry and to narrow the issue to genuine "sidesplitters." The quiet humorist was outside the scope of our exercise. So, of course, the wit. Such men as W. W. Jacobs, Pett Ridge, *et hoc genus*, do not produce the laughter that hurts. Nor, as a rule, do the satirists or wits. Sidesplitting laughter is usually evoked by something nearer farce than comedy. There is a daring invention which borders on madness, which removes farce from comedy, and evokes the laughter that hurts; but of course, many "straight" novelists have tried their hands at it. Notably Stevenson in *The Wrong Box*, or Hichens in *The Londoners*. I cannot read either of these now, but if I could, I dare say I should recapture some of the earlier agony of side-splitting laughter. Chesterton often tried it, and his *Napoleon of Notting Hill* was third on my list. I have laughed myself sick over it.

The business of producing sidesplitting laughter comes, of course, much easier to the dramatist than to the novelist, but several great authors have produced the effect in books not solely designed as extravaganza. Parts, for example, of *The Irish R.M.*, which lives for ever as straight human comedy, break out into sidesplitting extravaganza. Beerbohm's *Seven Men* remains on my list; so does Barry Pain's *The One Before*. And I recently added a modern: and by a woman writer at that—*Cold-Comfort Farm*.

It shocks me to recall that my first two publications, now quite irretrievably "out of print" (praise the Lord), were of the sidesplitting type, and succeeded in their avowed object, at least with one reader—the author—a decade after publication.

Odd that that great writer, Queen Victoria, in her immortal *Leaves from the Journal*, in one or two notable passages produces on me the same effects as do the most studied and elaborate efforts of Stevenson, Hichens and Beerbohm in their special role of sidesplitter.

The General's Speech.—We were drawn up in a hollow square on a damp field. Most of us had been saturated two hours earlier by a heavy shower. Intolerable delays had carried on the inspection of our unit an hour beyond scheduled time, and at home the men's dinners were waiting and spoiling.

THE OLD VIC COMPANY PRESENT A PLAY AT ALNWICK CASTLE, NEAR NEWCASTLE

Alnwick Castle has been a stronghold of the Percy family for centuries: it was invaded recently by an army of B.B.C. officials, members of the Old Vic Company and hundreds of schoolchildren. The children included girls of the Newcastle Church High School and boys and girls from Alnwick and the neighbouring villages: they were the audience in the castle's magnificent Guest Hall at an unusual production by the youngest members of the Old Vic Company, who are now on tour in the area. The production was a special children's entertainment

But the Inspecting General—a fine, cheery fellow—had a speech to give birth to, and he was determined not to scamp the hour of his delivery, after so long a conception. He had one admirable sentiment to ram home. He had conceived the idea—how do these great ideas originate?—that "we must not become complaisant" about the chances of invasion. That one idea was the whole gist of his speech. He clothed it in eleven different costumes. And towards two o'clock he forgot that he had said it, and briskly recalled us to "the point of what he wished to say." And then he began to say it again. Perhaps it was my own heart-cry or groan which induced him to look at his watch.

My own style is redundant. Perhaps I am the last man to throw a stone at his loquacity. But I, at least, do not keep you from your dinners, or keep you on your legs. The soldier *must* listen to the general. The reader can put me in the w.p.b. That is the difference. I do indeed believe that, if the art of expressing a simple idea in the simplest and fewest words were taught as a vital item in the syllabus of staff colleges by teachers (not necessarily soldiers) who have been trained as writers or speakers, our Army administration would greatly improve, and some of the monstrous infliction of redundant verbiage, muddled instructions and waste of valuable paper would be eliminated. A boring speaker in the House of Commons becomes "the dinner-bell of the House." The boring general is in a dangerously more tyrannical position. And the reader of redundant military verbosity may not treat the writer as he can treat a journalist or political publicist.

Post-War Education.—While many persons and institutions are busy planning for post-war reconstruction, the silence of the public- and private-school authorities must imply profound thought or total obstinacy. So long as there are enough parents ready to fork out £200 and £300 a year to continue during the war the "mixture as before," I suppose the problem does not appear particularly urgent to headmasters and governing bodies. Yet among parents the problem *is* regarded as urgent, and the doubts and questions which require to be solved increase every day. The chief doubt in the minds of parents of the kind who could once afford or scrape the luxury of a private public-school education for their sons, is this: For what sort of career are we to-day preparing our small sons? What professions, trades, callings, will be open to them in the 1950's? How can we best fit them for the obscure future?

How can we give them an education *and* an outlook which will cover the possibilities of the unknown and not handicap them in the scramble for a livelihood when they become men? Will the land once more afford a living to skilled men willing to work? Will the Higher Professions and the Civil Service still demand scholarship, University degrees and the old school tie? Will proficiency at cricket still be a passport to posts of responsibility? Will a "Blue" be an asset or a handicap? Will Latin, will Greek, be professional assets or recreational luxuries?

Economic facts *may* solve the problem for them by reducing below "danger point" the supply of parents ready to pinch themselves to secure for their children the benefits of the ancient shibboleth Meanwhile, they dither and mark time because the goose still lays a reasonable supply of golden eggs, because the uncertainty remains as to whether the Government will take a hand or a lead in solving the problem for them.

To the queries of parents, their answers are delphic or inaudible. They are prepared to listen to pleas for reduction of fees in special cases of hardship. They are not yet prepared to reconsider the whole basis of the system and syllabus. Two such have said to me: "Well, what alternative form of education *can* you suggest for your boy?" If that is not begging an urgent question, I know not what may so be described. Who have a more urgent duty to find, and object in finding, a solution than they? One might point the argument by a trivial criticism of the average private-school syllabus. Why is "carpentry" an extra, and cricket thrown in at the inclusive fee of £70 a term?

Which is likely to be of more service to a boy with his living to earn and a house to be kept over his head in 1955?

If "*redeunt Saturnia regna*" is a far-sighted motto of the public- and private-school masters in 1941, there is a lot of useless ploughing being done in Britain to-day.

The reign of Saturn has been an unconscionable time a-dying, but I, for one, believe that its number is up at last, and the Edwardian mentality a dangerous illusion.

J. G.

THE SHAFTESBURY HOMES AND "ARETHUSA" TRAINING SHIP

These are very difficult days to secure the wherewithal to feed, clothe and educate the children in the various branches. So many friends have had to curtail or cease altogether their gifts. It was therefore most encouraging to find a letter in the post from one of our Colonies containing the glad news that one supporter had decided to double his gift, adding "I congratulate you on the most marvellous work that you are doing for Great Britain, and you can rest assured that my good wishes go with your efforts." The Society needs more friends like this one to fill gaps caused by death and other causes. Will you take a share in this "marvellous work" for the children? Start now and write to the Secretary, 164, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.C.2, to learn what is being done and how.

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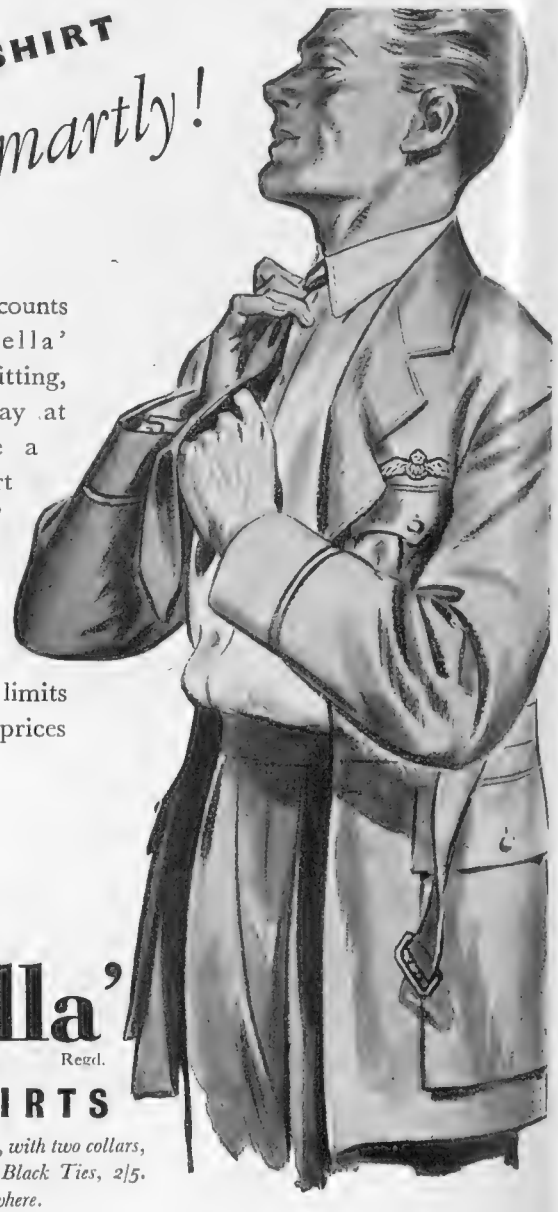

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THREE years ago, I was a garage mechanic, making 50/- a week. When war came, I joined the Navy as a motor-mechanic, went through a course of training, passed the tests, and here I am — Chief Petty Officer on an M.T.B. (motor torpedo boat), the fastest craft afloat.

An M.T.B. goes out under cover of darkness, fires her torpedoes where they'll do most good, returns to re-load, and repeats. It would be too bad if there was engine-trouble, and that's where I come in — I see there isn't, and I can tell you it makes a nice change looking after 1000 h.p. engines after tinkering with 7 h.p. stuff.

The only snag is being away from the wife, especially during the blitz periods. Last year she was working right in the middle of it and I suppose I must have got worried about her. Anyway I began to feel like a chewed string. Even a long sleep didn't seem to rest me. I was *always* tired. So while I was home on leave once, my wife would insist that I got the doctor to give me a tonic. I thought he'd just give me a bottle of the old pink medicine, but instead of that he talked to me about the three Sleep Groups.

It seems you can divide people into three Sleep Groups. The 3rd Group are the people who suffer from real insomnia. The 2nd Group are the people who seem to sleep all right but don't get properly rested by their sleep. The 1st Group are the right 'uns — they get the kind of sleep that does a real repairing job. The doctor said Horlicks would help me to get back into the 1st Sleep Group and build me up generally.

So my wife and I started taking Horlicks, and to cut a long story short — it's done us both a power of good.

In the last letter I had from my wife, she was saying how much fresher she feels now all day. I'm the same. I'm quite bright even first thing in the morning! And how I enjoy our night runs now! I'm back in the 1st Sleep Group all right and I give Horlicks credit for it. What I think is this — it's good, nourishing food, you sleep well on it, and it builds up a sort of *reserve of energy* in you for the next day.

YOUR sleeping time is your repairing time. During sleep, your body and mind should be completely rested and restored so that you are alert and brimful of energy next day. If you are not restored in this way by your sleep, you cannot be your best or do your best. You *must* get into the 1st Sleep Group with the people who are fully alive, alert and purposeful from morning till night. Horlicks will help you to get into the 1st Sleep Group. In every way it will build you up and enable you to put out the extra effort needed from each one of us to-day.

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IN QUEST OF GOOD HOTELS

BY ASHLEY COURTENAY

Owing to rationing of paper and the demand on our editorial pages, it is necessary to omit from time to time Mr. Ashley Courtenay's usual weekly article. We would, however, emphasise that his services are always available for advising SPHERE *readers by post of hotels, both large and small, known to him personally. Letters, accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope for reply, should be addressed to him c/o The Editor,* THE SPHERE, *Commonwealth House, 1, New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1. Personal and telephone inquiries, however, cannot be accepted.*

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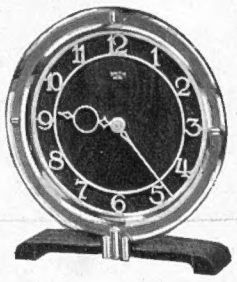

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